MARVEL MASTERWORKS®
DAREDEVIL®
VOLUME 9

DAREDEVIL Nos. 85-96

GERRY CONWAY & GENE COLAN

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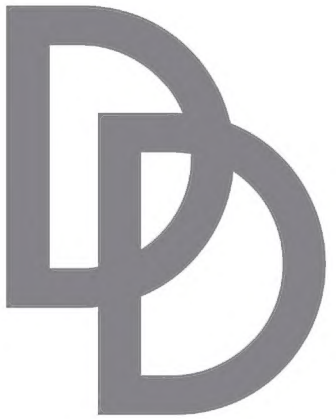
PRESENTS

VOLUME 9
COLLECTING

DAREDEVIL Nos. 85-96

GERRY CONWAY • GENE COLAN



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Nos. 85-96

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MATT AND NATASHA'S SAN FRANCISCO ADVENTURE OR "WHEREVER YOU GO, THERE YOU ARE"

BY GERRY CONWAY

For the first ten years of the Marvel Age, super heroes were pretty provincial.

By "provincial," I don't mean they were small town—I mean their adventures took place in a fairly circumscribed, local community (with the exception, of course, of the worlds-spanning cosmic stories featured in *Fantastic Four* or *The Mighty Thor*). That community, New York City, might well be the country's largest and most diverse city, but it was still just one city, one community—one province, so to speak. In other words, super heroes were… provincial.

There were lots of reasons for this, of course. When Stan Lee and Jack Kirby started the Marvel Age, they situated the Fantastic Four's headquarters, the Baxter Building, in Midtown Manhattan because Stan wanted Reed Richards and his companions to seem to be part of the "real" world, not some fictional Metropolis or Gotham City. When Spider-Man came along, Peter Parker lived with his Aunt May in Forest Hills, Queens, for the same reason: to make his adventures feel more authentic by setting them in a "real" location. And for Stan, a life-long New Yorker, the world couldn't get more "real" than New York City and its suburbs.

The Avengers set up shop in Tony Stark's mansion on Fifth Avenue.

Doctor Strange lived in an occult-themed townhouse in Greenwich Village.

The X-Men went to a special boarding school in Westchester, New York, twenty-five minutes from Broadway.

And Matt Murdock lost his sight and gained his radar senses in a bizarre traffic accident in Hell's Kitchen.

Ten years in, New York City was getting pretty crowded with super heroes.

Maybe it was time for one of them to move out.

* * *

A personal aside. Trust me, this digression will lead back to Matt Murdock and the streets of San Francisco soon enough.

In early 1971, I was struggling with a personal crisis that, like most crises I've experienced in my life, was both self-inflicted and more dramatic than it needed to be. I'd dropped out of college (kids, don't do this) and as a result, exposed myself to the draft during the height of the Vietnam War (kids, really, don't do this) and I was fighting with my parents over issues that, in retrospect, weren't important (kids, you will do this) and I was determined to strike out on my own regardless of what anyone said (kids—ah, hell, I didn't listen; why should you?).

I decided I needed to Get Out Of Town.

The previous summer, at the Clarion Science Fiction Writer's Workshop (which, at that time, was still held in Clarion, Pennsylvania), I'd met and become friendly with Harlan Ellison. Harlan was (and still is, bless him) a tremendously charismatic figure in the science fiction writing community, and he was kind and generous to the young writers at the workshop, yours truly among them. He bought one of my stories for his upcoming anthology, *Last Dangerous Visions*, and we stayed in touch after the workshop was over. When I decided, in early 1971, that I needed to Get Out Of Town, I called Harlan, and he graciously invited me to stay with him at his home in Los Angeles, Ellison Wonderland.

It did not go well.

Something I've realized as I've grown older and had children of my own: eighteen-year-old boys make terrible houseguests. Eighteen-year-old boys in the midst of a self-inflicted existential crisis, in particular, make truly terrible houseguests.

After two weeks I'm pretty sure Harlan wanted to kill me, and I was absolutely sure that, once again, I needed to Get Out Of Town.

To backtrack a bit, when I told my friends in New York that I was going out to California for a visit, one of those friends, Denny O'Neil, suggested I look up one of *his* friends in San Francisco while I was on the West Coast. (People in New York tend to think of the West Coast as one place with all the cities kinda smushed together, so the fact that Los Angeles and San Francisco are about 500 miles apart didn't really enter into the equation when Denny suggested I meet up with his friend "while I was out there.") I called Denny's friend; he said, sure, come on up; so I hopped a plane to San Francisco and crashed on a couch in Haight-Ashbury.

Have any of you seen *Inherent Vice*?

Haight-Ashbury in 1971 was a lot like the Los Angeles beach town scene "Doc" Sportello wanders through in *Inherent Vice*.

Enough said about *that*.

Maybe it was the special influence of the community I visited, maybe it was Getting Out Of Town after making myself a pest to Harlan, maybe it was being in the right place at the right time in my life—whatever the reason, I *loved* San Francisco. I took tons of photos, toured the city from one end to the other, climbed up and down Telegraph Hill and Lombard

Street, rode the cable cars, ate crabs at Fisherman's Wharf, flew a kite in Golden Gate Park, took the ferry, and walked everywhere. I loved it. I told myself, someday, I'm going to move here.

So far that hasn't happened, and with housing prices in the Bay Area being what they are now, it probably never will.

But I did manage the next best thing:

Less than a year later, I moved Matt and Natasha.

* * *

I'll admit it. For me, writing comics always has involved more than a little wish fulfillment. In 1971 that was literally true: I'd dreamed about writing comics from the time I picked up my first Marvel Comic at the age of ten, and there I was, less than ten years later, writing comics. That's the very definition of wish fulfillment. So, it made perfect sense to me, as I contemplated what I saw as the problem of Marvel's fictional New York City being overcrowded with super heroes, that I should solve that problem by another act of wish fulfillment. If I couldn't (or wouldn't) move to San Francisco, I'd move my surrogate New Yorkers. I'd take Matt Murdock and Natasha Romanova to a new city where they'd meet new challenges…

Well, to a new city, anyway. With the exception of The Indestructible Man, Daredevil and the Black Widow found themselves facing several familiar foes who apparently also found New York too crowded with super villains for their liking.

At least the scenery was different.

Which, in my clumsy way, brings me to a discussion of what really makes this particular sequence of Daredevil's adventures so memorable for me (and, I hope, for you):

The fantastic art of Gene Colan and Tom Palmer.

When I came back from San Francisco I brought with me a hundred or so photos of the city, which I gave to Gene as reference, though I needn't have bothered. Gene was as enamored by the look and feel of San Francisco's hilly streets as I was, but for a different reason, I suspect. As should be obvious to anyone who studies Gene's art, he was a passionate student of the film noir style—and San Francisco, from *The Maltese Falcon* on, was the spiritual home of film noir. Gene's tendency to use urban landscapes, light and darkness, to create mood and suspense, are on full display here. He takes dramatic advantage of the varying angles and planes provided by the city's hills to make Daredevil and the Widow's rooftop exploits appear more exciting and dangerous than ever. His cityscapes are gorgeous. But his contribution to the kinds of stories we told is even more dramatic.

Whenever a writer and artist work together for more than a few issues, they begin to understand each other's storytelling strengths and interests, and, in a good collaboration, they inspire each other to stretch their storytelling into new areas.

After working with Gene for almost a year by the time we moved Matt and Natasha to San Francisco, I'd learned he was very good at drawing the Black Widow in dramatic action. I also learned he was a big fan of fast cars and, in particular, the Steve McQueen movie *Bullitt*. (We were doing a book set in San Francisco, how could that not come up as a reference point and topic of conversation?) As a result, I focused an entire arc of this sequence of stories around Natasha Romanova and her mysterious ally/friend/enemy/lover, Danny French, and involved them in several high-speed car chases that I believe stand as the high point of these issues.

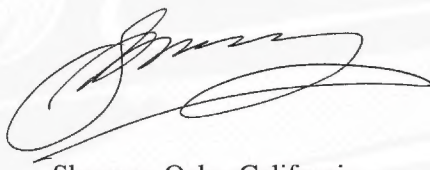
(When it comes to high-speed car chases, these may be the best ever staged in a super-hero comic; probably because most super-hero comics never stage high-speed car chases. Because super heroes jump around rooftops. Which is why the Spider-Mobile was such a dumb idea. But I digress. That's what happens when your memory takes you back to a time when you hung out with folks like "Doc" Sportello. Where was I?)

Gene's art in these issues, as inked by Tom Palmer, is some of the best work of his career. It's certainly some of the best work we did together. The stories are much stronger than the ones collected in the previous volume, and I'm particularly proud of our development of Black Widow in these pages. Before she became a logo-sharing co-star in *Daredevil*, Natasha Romanova had enjoyed moderate success with a half-book solo feature in *Amazing Adventures*, but, for my money, this arc of stories is the moment when she started on the path that made her the Black Widow we know and love today. Even though Daredevil's name comes first on the logo, these issues are more about his co-star's travails than about Matt Murdock's (for better or worse). And for that, we can credit the inspiration of Gene and Tom's art. They did such an awesome job bringing the Black Widow to life, they made me want to write more scenes for her, which led to a greater emphasis on her story over Matt's.

(Like I said, for better or worse. I'm inclined to think it's for the better, but then, as I've mentioned elsewhere, I'm a big fan of powerful women like Natasha Romanova. Whether that's reflected in the quality of my writing of such characters is another question.)

So there you have it. The how and the why of Matt and Natasha's San Francisco adventure. Hope you enjoy what follows as much as we enjoyed the process of creating it.

And, yeah, I know it isn't called "Frisco."



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FIRST--THE RUMBLING OF MASSIVE JETS, THE SLOW FORWARD MOTION, HESITANT, STRAINING--THEN, A GENTLE SENSE OF LIFTING AS HARD FIBERGLASS WHEELS SCRAPE BLACK TARMAC--
--AND FINALLY, RUSHING AGAINST THE CURRENT OF YOUR BLOOD, THE THRUST OF THOSE MIGHTY WINGS THROUGH COLD LONDON AIR, THE LAST FULL SURGE--
--AS THE GROUND, THE WORLD YOU KNOW AND UNDERSTAND, DROPS AWAY BENEATH YOU.
THE NIGHT SKY OPENS; TREMBLING, THE GIANT BOEING 747 RISES INTO THAT EBONY VAULT...!
747
FUNNY HOW THREE DAYS CAN MOVE SO QUICKLY, ISN'T IT, MATTHEW?
THREE DAYS AND EVEN THE SPECTRE OF DAREDEVIL SEEMS TO FADE INTO THE DARKER PARTS OF YOUR MEMORY!
NIGHT FLIGHT!
STAN LEE, EDITOR
GERRY CONWAY, SCRIPTER
GENE COLAN, ARTIST
SYD SHORES, INKER
JON COSTA, LETTERER

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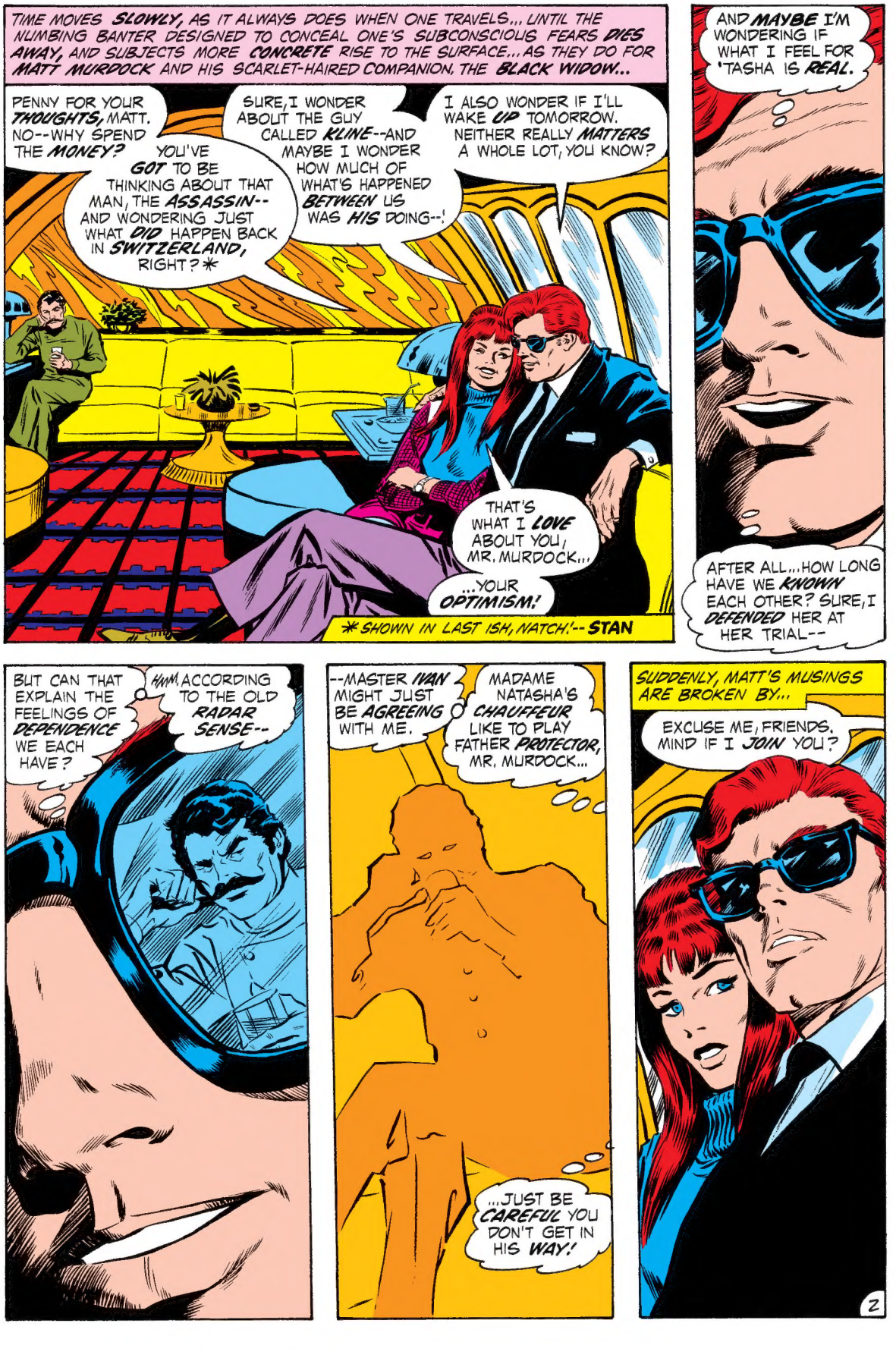
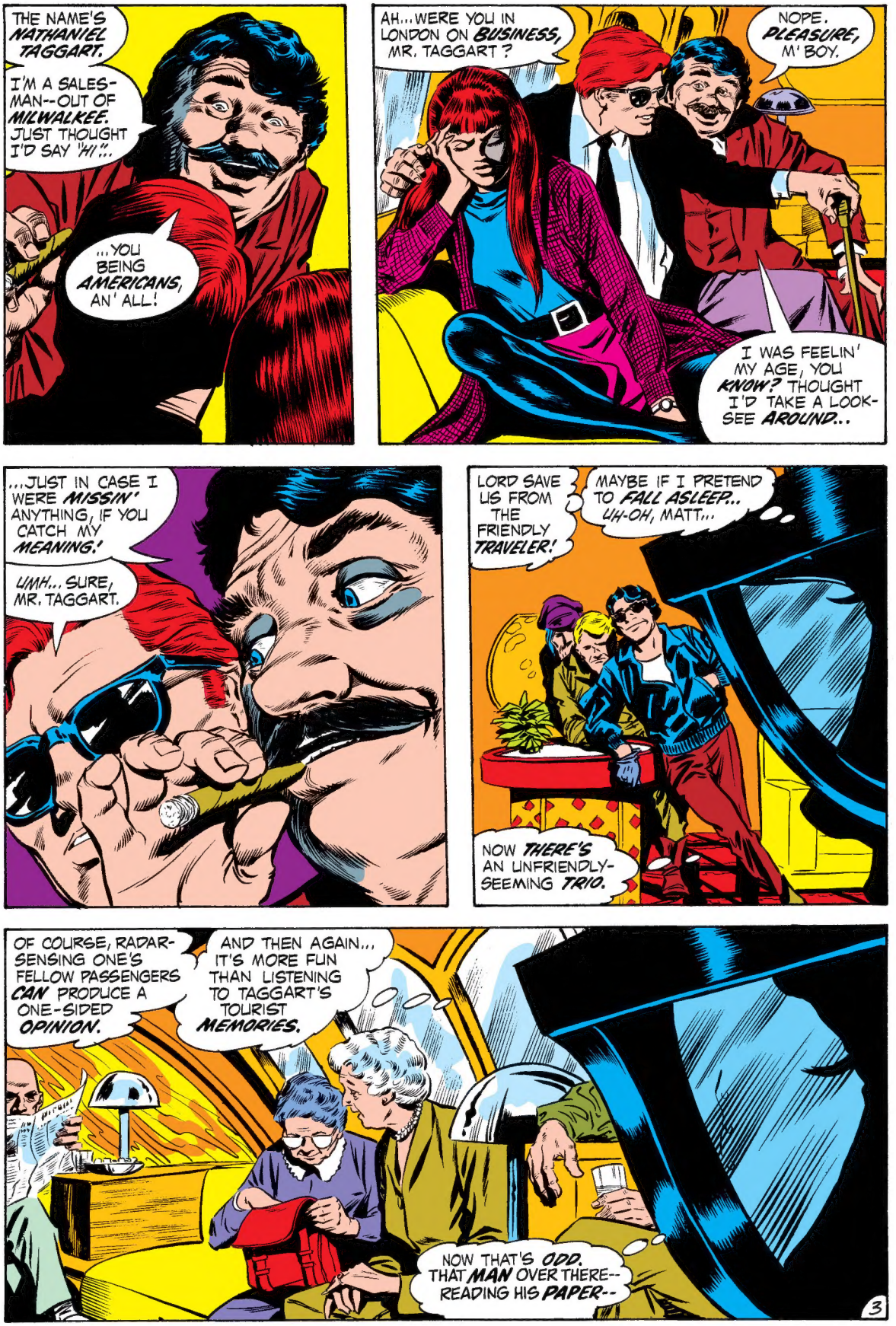
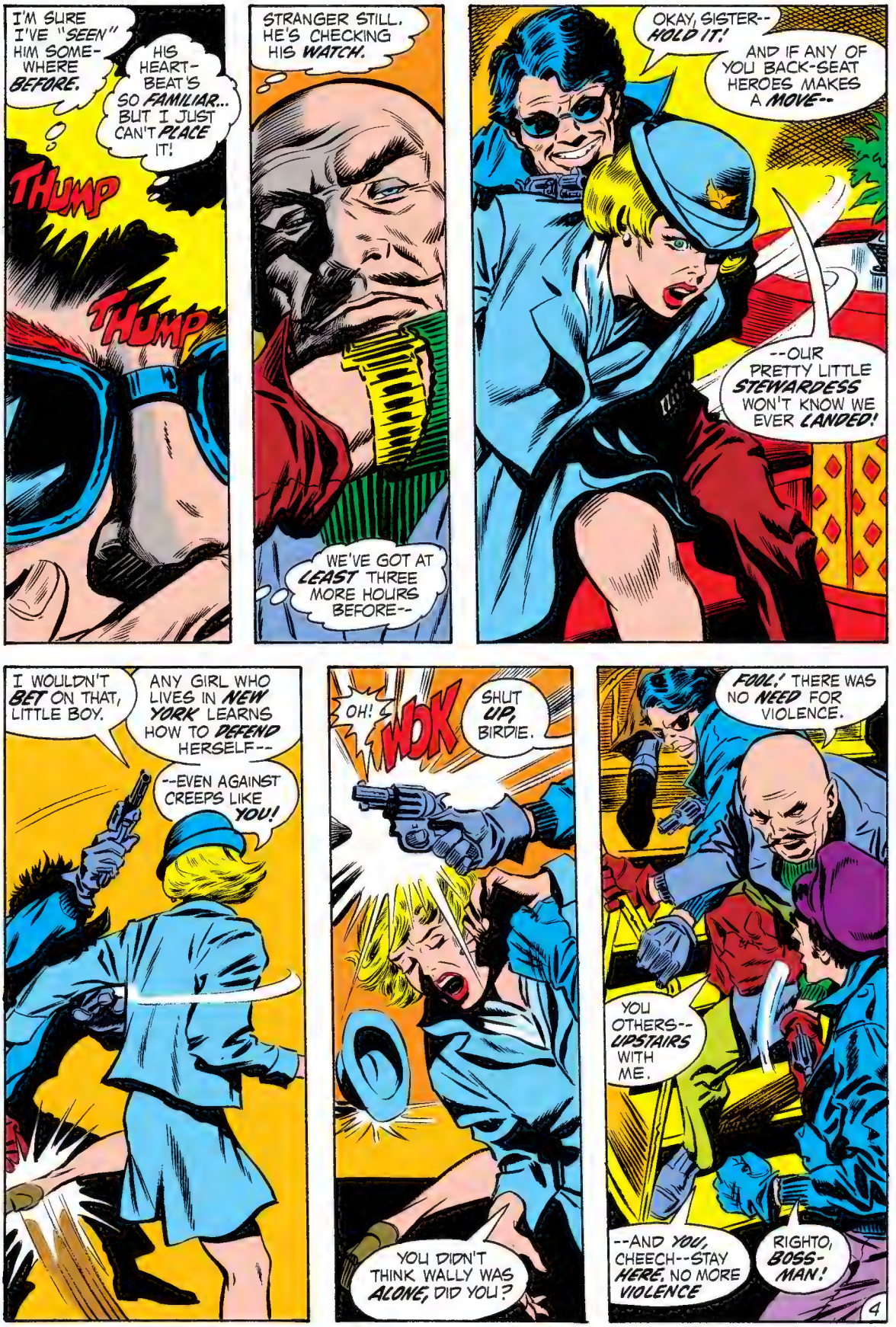

TIME MOVES SLOWLY, AS IT ALWAYS DOES WHEN ONE TRAVELS... UNTIL THE NUMBING BANTER DESIGNED TO CONCEAL ONE'S SUBCONSCIOUS FEARS DIES AWAY, AND SUBJECTS MORE CONCRETE RISE TO THE SURFACE... AS THEY DO FOR MATT MURDOCK AND HIS SCARLET-HAIRED COMPANION, THE BLACK WIDOW...
PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS, MATT. NO--WHY SPEND THE MONEY?
YOU'VE GOT TO BE THINKING ABOUT THAT MAN, THE ASSASSIN-- AND WONDERING JUST WHAT DID HAPPEN BACK IN SWITZERLAND, RIGHT?*
SURE, I WONDER ABOUT THE GUY CALLED KLINE--AND MAYBE I WONDER HOW MUCH OF WHAT'S HAPPENED BETWEEN US WAS HIS DOING--!
I ALSO WONDER IF I'LL WAKE UP TOMORROW. NEITHER REALLY MATTERS A WHOLE LOT, YOU KNOW?
THAT'S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT YOU, MR. MURDOCK...
...YOUR OPTIMISM!
*SHOWN IN LAST ISH, NATCH!--STAN
AND MAYBE I'M WONDERING IF WHAT I FEEL FOR 'TASHA IS REAL.
AFTER ALL...HOW LONG HAVE WE KNOWN EACH OTHER? SURE, I DEFENDED HER AT HER TRIAL--
BUT CAN THAT EXPLAIN THE FEELINGS OF DEPENDENCE WE EACH HAVE?
HMM. ACCORDING TO THE OLD RADAR SENSE--
--MASTER IVAN MIGHT JUST BE AGREEING WITH ME.
MADAME NATASHA'S CHAUFFEUR LIKE TO PLAY FATHER PROTECTOR, MR. MURDOCK...
...JUST BE CAREFUL YOU DON'T GET IN HIS WAY!
SUDDENLY, MATT'S MUSINGS ARE BROKEN BY...
EXCUSE ME, FRIENDS. MIND IF I JOIN YOU?
2

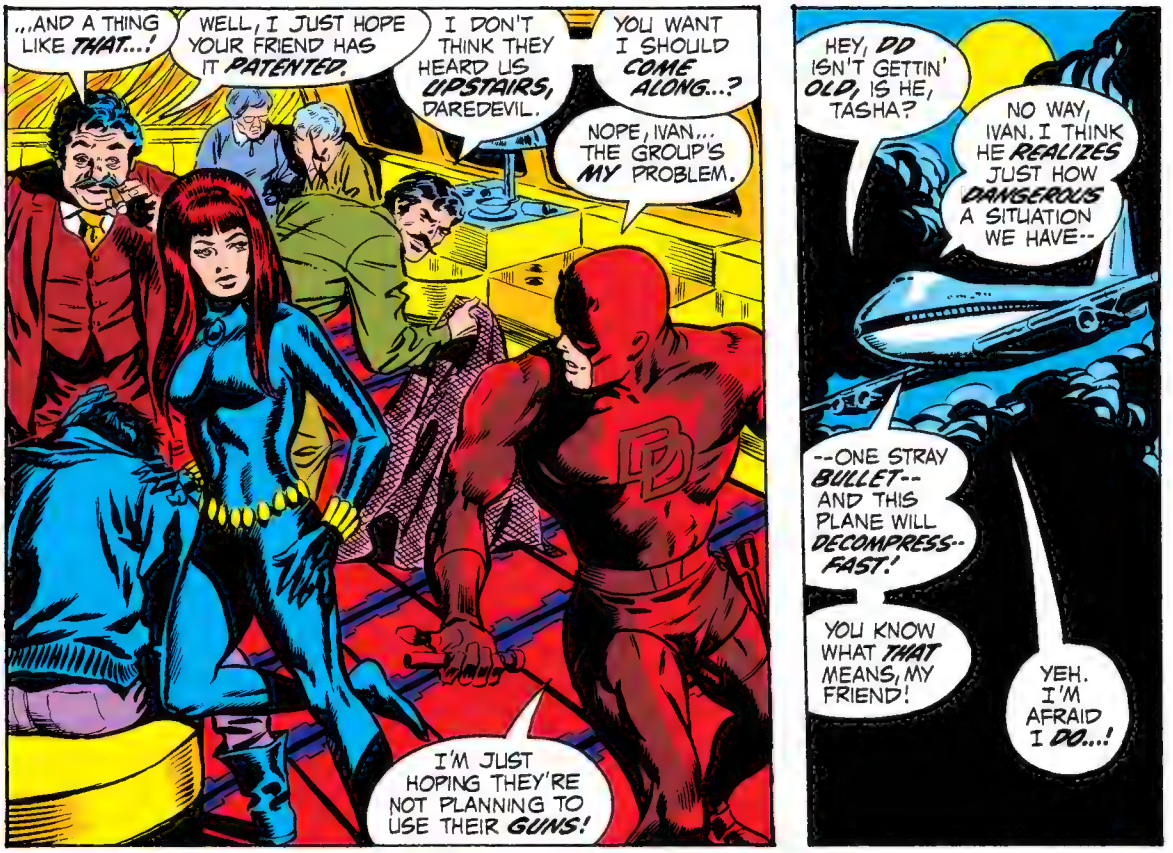

THE NAME'S NATHANIEL TAGGART.
I'M A SALES-MAN--OUT OF MILWALKEE. JUST THOUGHT I'D SAY "HI"...
...YOU BEING AMERICANS, AN' ALL!
AH...WERE YOU IN LONDON ON BUSINESS, MR. TAGGART?
NOPE. PLEASURE, M' BOY.
I WAS FEELIN' MY AGE, YOU KNOW? THOUGHT I'D TAKE A LOOK-SEE AROUND...
...JUST IN CASE I WERE MISSIN' ANYTHING, IF YOU CATCH MY MEANING!
UMH... SURE, MR. TAGGART.
LORD SAVE US FROM THE FRIENDLY TRAVELER!
MAYBE IF I PRETEND TO FALL ASLEEP... UH-OH, MATT...
NOW THERE'S AN UNFRIENDLY-SEEMING TRIO.
OF COURSE, RADAR-SENSING ONE'S FELLOW PASSENGERS CAN PRODUCE A ONE-SIDED OPINION.
AND THEN AGAIN... IT'S MORE FUN THAN LISTENING TO TAGGART'S TOURIST MEMORIES.
NOW THAT'S ODD. THAT MAN OVER THERE-- READING HIS PAPER--
3

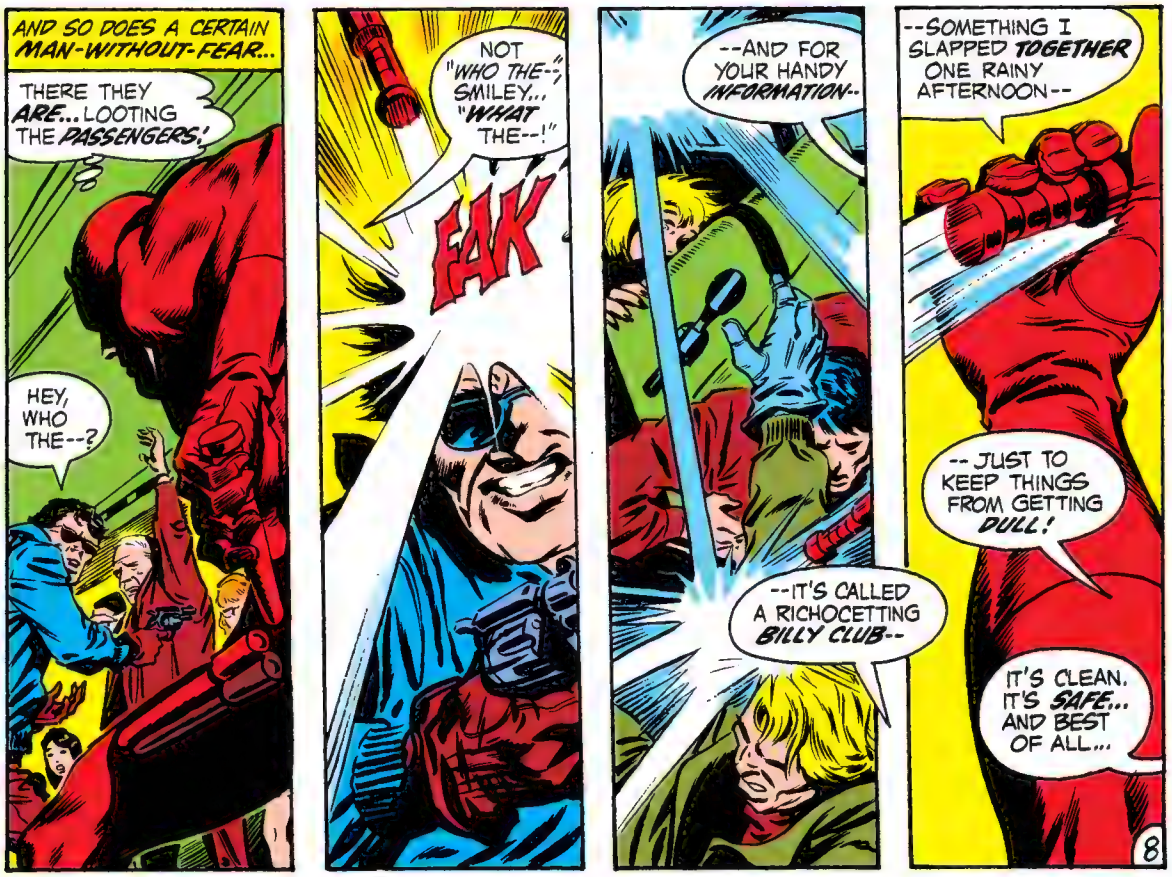

I'M SURE I'VE "SEEN" HIM SOMEWHERE BEFORE.
HIS HEARTBEAT'S SO FAMILIAR... BUT I JUST CAN'T PLACE IT!
THUMP
THUMP
STRANGER STILL. HE'S CHECKING HIS WATCH.
WE'VE GOT AT LEAST THREE MORE HOURS BEFORE--
OKAY, SISTER-- HOLD IT!
AND IF ANY OF YOU BACK-SEAT HEROES MAKES A MOVE--
--OUR PRETTY LITTLE STEWARDESS WON'T KNOW WE EVER LANDED!
I WOULDN'T BET ON THAT, LITTLE BOY.
ANY GIRL WHO LIVES IN NEW YORK LEARNS HOW TO DEFEND HERSELF--
--EVEN AGAINST CREEPS LIKE YOU!
OH!
WOK
SHUT UP, BIRDIE.
YOU DIDN'T THINK WALLY WAS ALONE, DID YOU?
FOOL! THERE WAS NO NEED FOR VIOLENCE.
YOU OTHERS-- UPSTAIRS WITH ME.
--AND YOU, CHEECH--STAY HERE. NO MORE VIOLENCE
RIGHTO, BOSS-MAN!
4

EVERYTHING MOVES SO QUICKLY... IT TAKES A MOMENT TO REACT, AND BY THEN...
WATCH YOURSELF, POPS.
THIS AIN'T NO WATER-PISTOL!
CAREFUL, BIG MAN. I'M IN THE MOOD FOR BREAKING...!
MATT...!
I KNOW, 'TASHA. GUARD THE REAR.
...IT'S TIME DD MADE AN APPEARANCE!
IVAN, I'M ASHAMED OF YOU!
YOU WERE GOING TO HOG THIS THUG ALL FOR YOURSELF, WEREN'T YOU?
OLD FRIEND, WHERE'S YOUR SENSE OF CHIVALRY?
LADIES FIRST, HMM?
HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON--
:ARRRRRkk!:
BOP
DON'T KNOW WHY I'M BOTHERING TO SWITCH IN THE WASH-ROOM!
THOSE TWO OLD LADIES NEVER GAVE ME A GLANCE. THEY WON'T REMEMBER ME...
...BUT ANY WAY YOU CUT IT... TAGGART WILL!
CRIPES! YOU'D THINK THEY'D MAKE THESE CLOSETS LARGER IN A 747--!
5

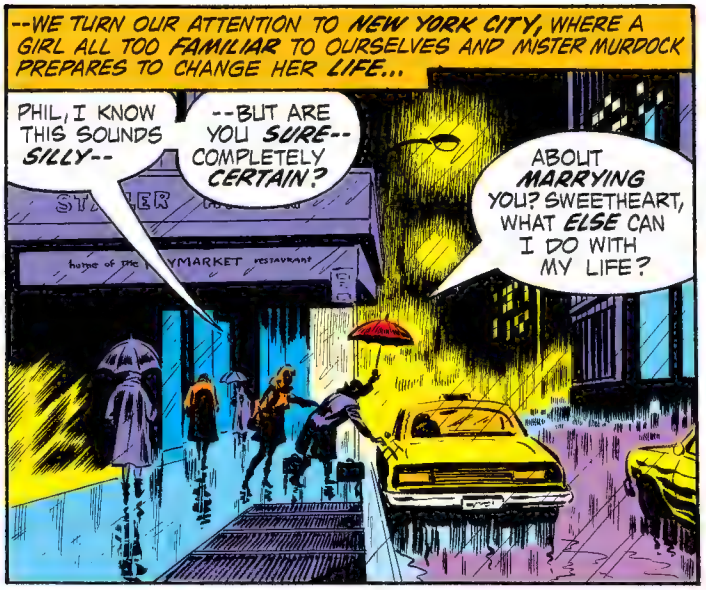
OKAY, SISTER-- YOU MADE YOUR POINT.
NOW-- MIND IF I MAKE MINE?
HEY, MISTER! HEY, DON'T--
DON'T HIT YOU? ALL RIGHT, ANGEL-FACE...
...HOW'S ABOUT I JUST DO... THIS!
IVAN, PLEASE! CONTROL YOURSELF. WE'RE NOT IN RUSSIA ANY MORE...
...AND THIS ISN'T ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE LATE SHOW MOVIES!
THANKS FOR REMINDING ME, SWEETHEART! WOULDN'T WANT TO RUIN BABY-MOUTH'S COMPLEXION, WOULD WE?
MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO TELL US WHAT THIS STICK-UP'S ALL ABOUT, HEY, HANDSOME?
SURE, COSSACK!
IT'S ABOUT A CAT WE CALL THE CHIEF--
--WHO'S PLANNIN' ON STEALING THIS BIG BIRD O' TIN--
--AND FLYIN' IT STRAIGHT TO SOME FRIENDS OF HIS--IN MEXICO!
OH MY GOODNESS!
YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT, SWEETS!
6

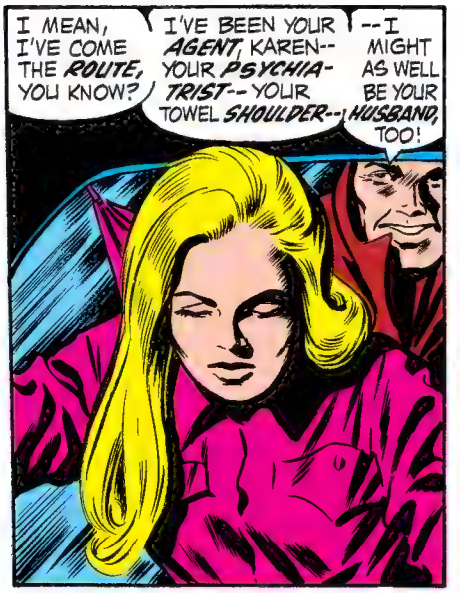
HAW! DIG THIS! THE OLD GOOSE IS SO SCARED-- SHE'S HICCUPPIN' LIKE CRAZY!
KEEP IT UP, GRANNY. IT MAY BE YOUR LAST--
HIC
HIC
HIC
:YEEOW!:
PARDON MY BILLY CLUB, GENT--
CHOCK
--BUT I SORTA THOUGHT IT WAS TIME I SAID HELLO!
HOLY CRUD! DAREDEVIL!
SAK
SEE THAT!
NOW I DON'T NEED TO INTRO-DUCE MYSELF!
NICE WORK, HERO-MAN.
YOU SURE YOU NEVER KNEW BOGART?
MATT'S TAKING AN AWFUL CHANCE CHANGING TO DD. I HOPE--
--MR. TAGGART!
MMMMMHM? OH, JUST LOOKING, MISS.
NEVER SEEN ANYTHING QUITE LIKE THIS LITTLE BABY...
I'LL TAKE THAT, MR. TAGGART.
OH? OH, SURE. JUST... HEH, JUST CURIOUS, LITTLE LADY.
I'M IN ENGINEERING SALES, YOU SEE...
7

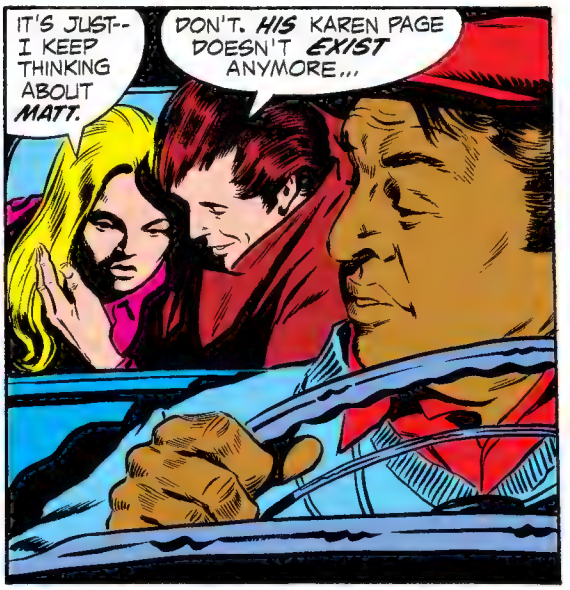

...AND A THING LIKE THAT...!
WELL, I JUST HOPE YOUR FRIEND HAS IT PATENTED.
I DON'T THINK THEY HEARD US UPSTAIRS, DAREDEVIL.
YOU WANT I SHOULD COME ALONG...?
NOPE, IVAN... THE GROUP'S MY PROBLEM.
I'M JUST HOPING THEY'RE NOT PLANNING TO USE THEIR GUNS!
HEY, DD ISN'T GETTIN' OLD, IS HE, TASHA?
NO WAY, IVAN. I THINK HE REALIZES JUST HOW DANGEROUS A SITUATION WE HAVE--
--ONE STRAY BULLET-- AND THIS PLANE WILL DECOMPRESS-- FAST!
YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS, MY FRIEND!
YEH. I'M AFRAID I DO...!

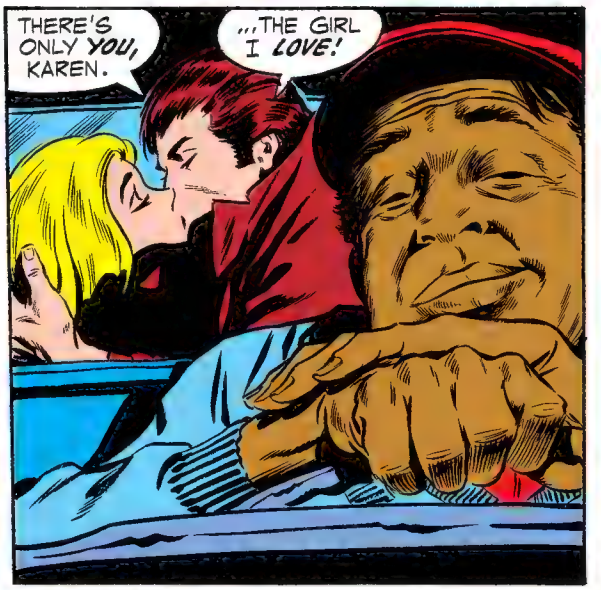

AND SO DOES A CERTAIN MAN-WITHOUT-FEAR...
THERE THEY ARE... LOOTING THE PASSENGERS!
HEY, WHO THE--?
NOT "WHO THE--", SMILEY... "WHAT THE--!"
FAK
--AND FOR YOUR HANDY INFORMATION--
--IT'S CALLED A RICHOCETTING BILLY CLUB--
--SOMETHING I SLAPPED TOGETHER ONE RAINY AFTERNOON--
-- JUST TO KEEP THINGS FROM GETTING DULL!
IT'S CLEAN. IT'S SAFE... AND BEST OF ALL...

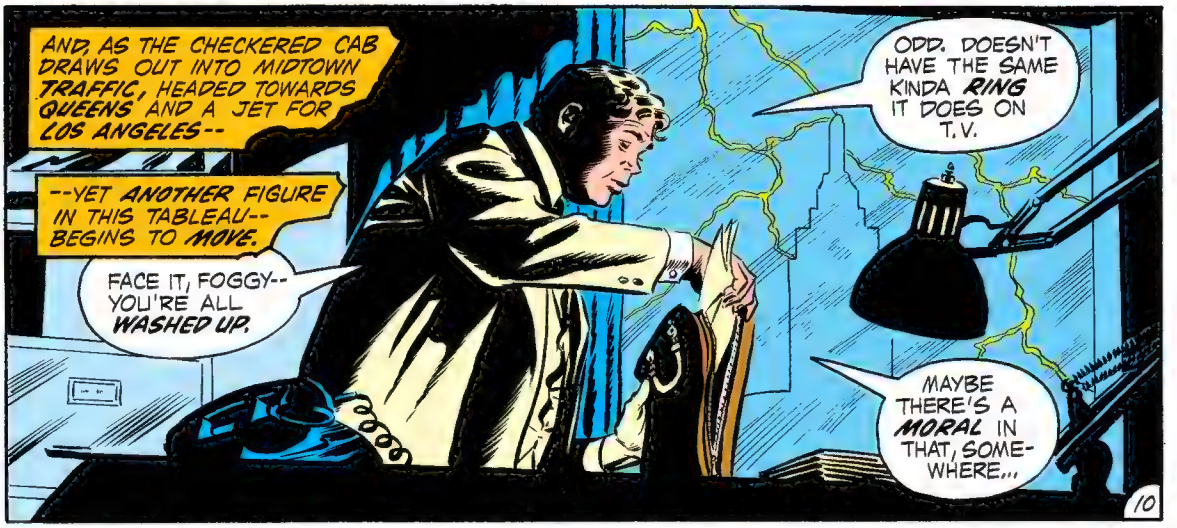
--IT'S NON-TOXIC!
WAIT... BEHIND ME... THAT WHIRRING SOUND...!
NO!
NOW I UNDERSTAND--I COULDN'T PLACE YOU BEFORE. YOU WERE OUT OF COSTUME--!
WHRRRR
YOU'RE--
--THE GLADIATOR!
YOU ALWAYS WERE PRETTY GOOD WITH FACES, PRETTY BOY--
AFTER ALL, WE'VE ONLY TANGLED ONCE OR TWICE BEFORE!
BUT BELIEVE ME, MY FRIEND, I'VE REMEMBERED THOSE TIMES--
--AN' NOW, I'M GONNA PAY ME BACK A LITTLE DEBT!
THEN, AS DD'S MUSCLES TENSE, WAITING FOR THE FIRST, POSSIBLY FATAL SLASH OF THOSE SPINNING BLADES--
9


--WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO NEW YORK CITY, WHERE A GIRL ALL TOO FAMILIAR TO OURSELVES AND MISTER MURDOCK PREPARES TO CHANGE HER LIFE...
PHIL, I KNOW THIS SOUNDS SILLY--
--BUT ARE YOU SURE-- COMPLETELY CERTAIN?
ABOUT MARRYING YOU? SWEETHEART, WHAT ELSE CAN I DO WITH MY LIFE?

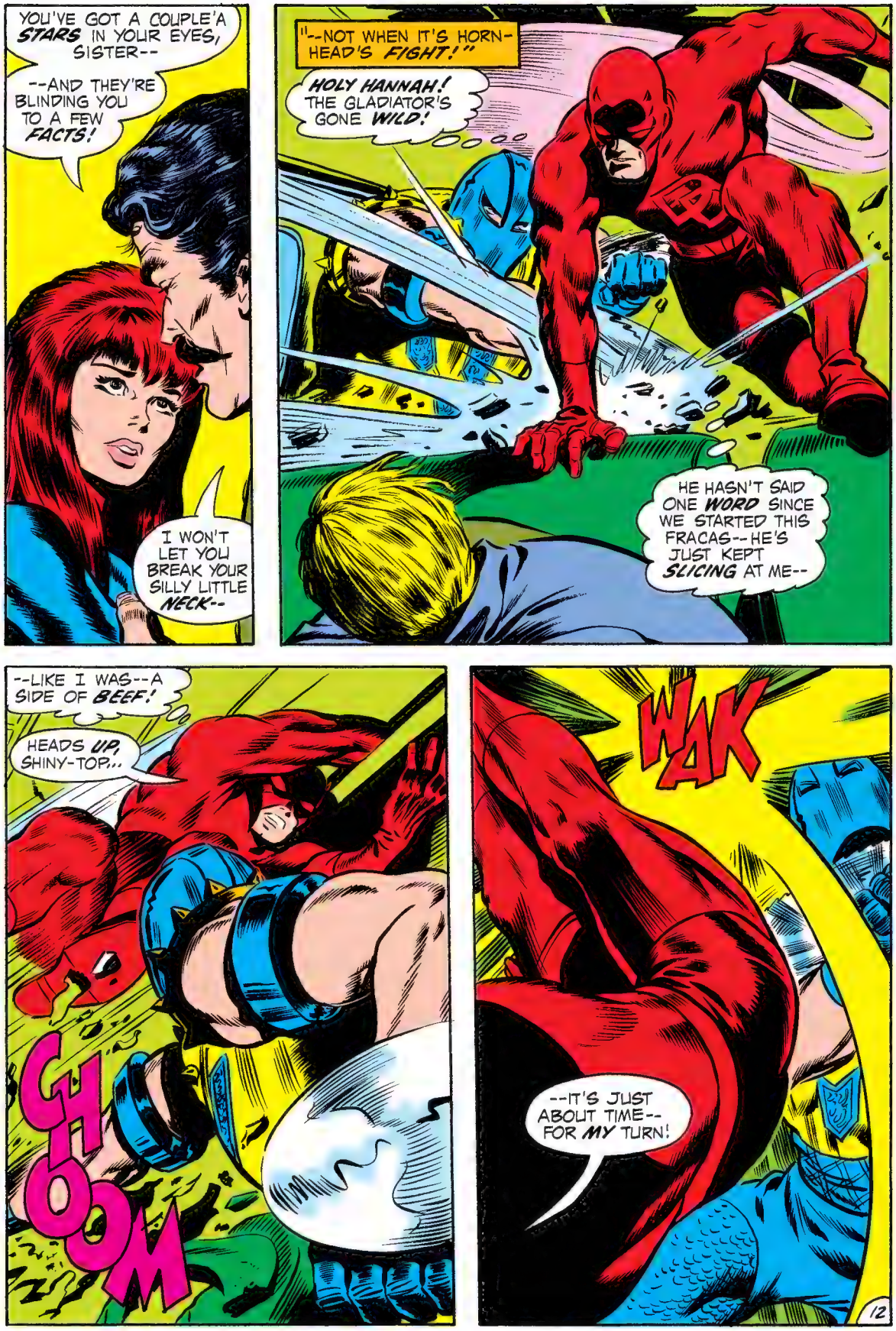

I MEAN, I'VE COME THE ROUTE, YOU KNOW?
I'VE BEEN YOUR AGENT, KAREN-- YOUR PSYCHIA-TRIST-- YOUR TOWEL SHOULDER--
--I MIGHT AS WELL BE YOUR HUSBAND, TOO!

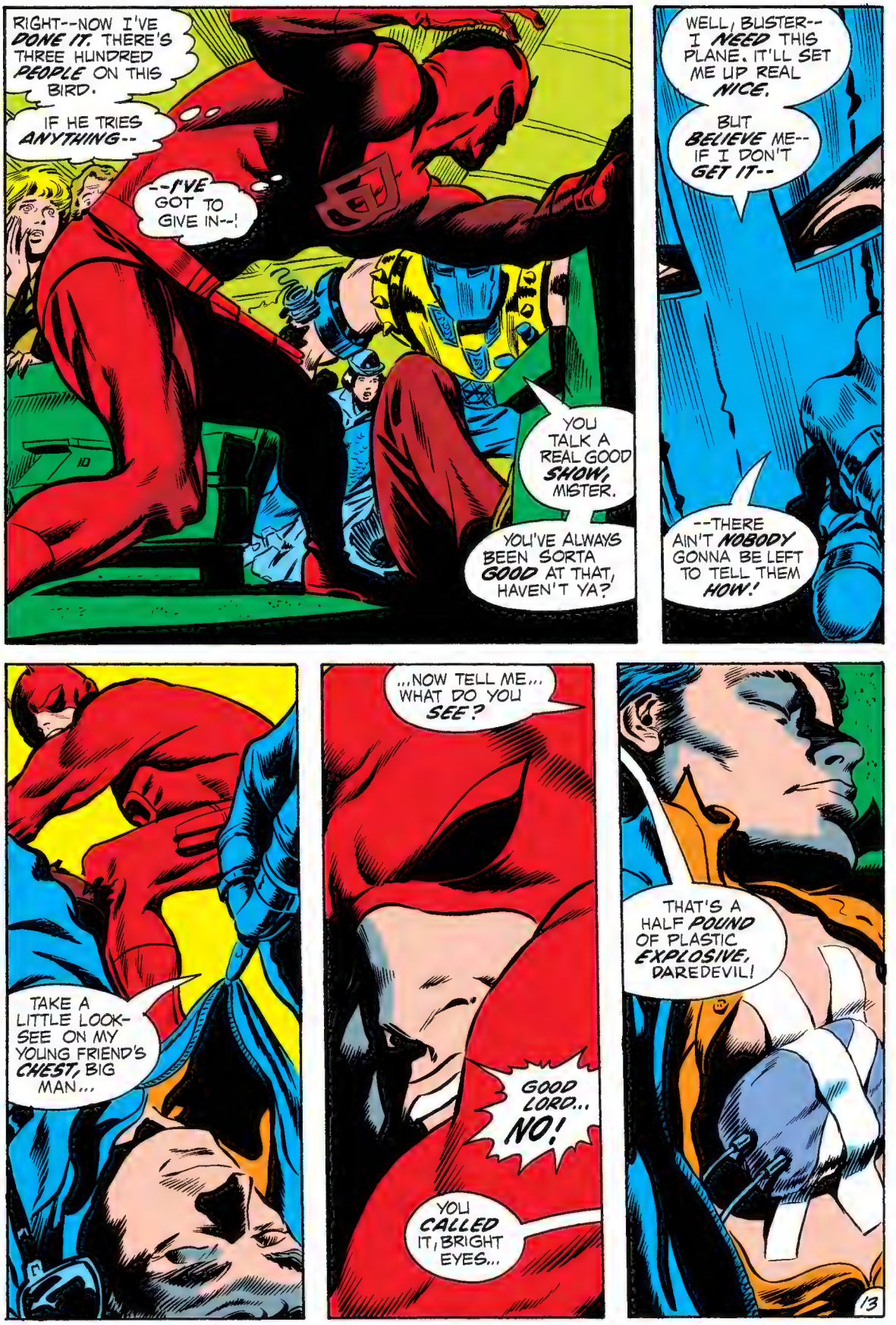

IT'S JUST-- I KEEP THINKING ABOUT MATT.
DON'T. HIS KAREN PAGE DOESN'T EXIST ANYMORE...

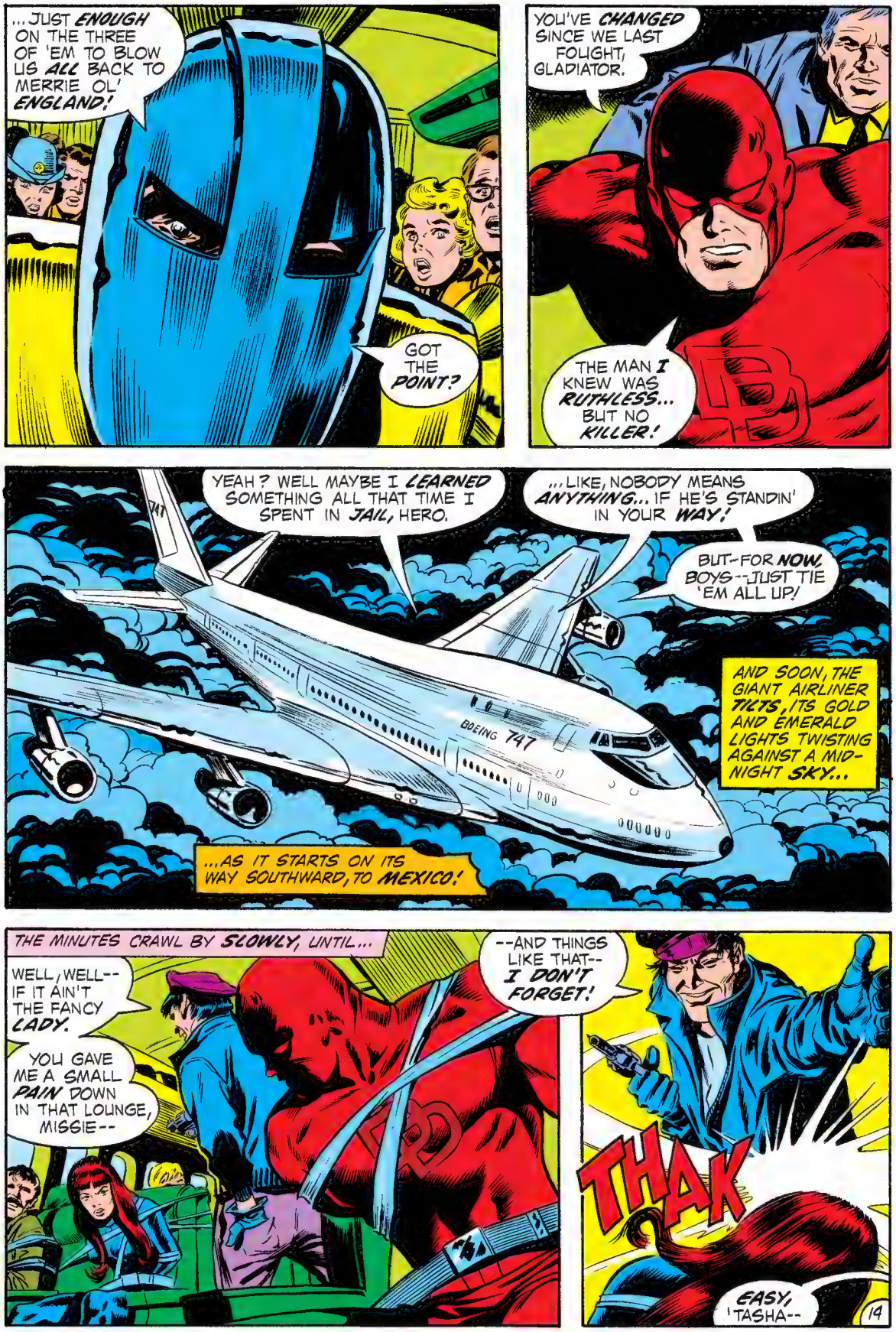

THERE'S ONLY YOU, KAREN.
...THE GIRL I LOVE!


AND, AS THE CHECKERED CAB DRAWS OUT INTO MIDTOWN TRAFFIC, HEADED TOWARDS QUEENS AND A JET FOR LOS ANGELES--
--YET ANOTHER FIGURE IN THIS TABLEAU-- BEGINS TO MOVE.
FACE IT, FOGGY-- YOU'RE ALL WASHED UP.
ODD. DOESN'T HAVE THE SAME KINDA RING IT DOES ON T.V.
MAYBE THERE'S A MORAL IN THAT, SOME-WHERE...
10

HIS FEATURES TIGHTEN. THERE'S NO MORE HUMOR LEFT.
ONCE HE WAS A MAN PROUD... A DISTRICT ATTORNEY, A FIGHTING YOUNG LAWYER...
...THEN, SOMEWHERE IN HIS YOUNG MAN'S PAST, HE MADE A MISTAKE...
CLICK
...AN ERROR CAUGHT BY A MAN WE KNEW AS KLINE. AN ERROR USED IN BLACK-MAIL.
AND NOW, HE'S NO LONGER A PROUD MAN.
TO ESCAPE DISGRACE, HE BETRAYED HIS FRIENDS...
...AND BY PUTTING THE BLACK WIDOW ON TRIAL AGAINST ALL JUSTICE...
...HE'S ULTIMATELY... BETRAYED...HIMSELF.
IVAN!
WHUMP
CRRASHH
SORRY, LITTLE LADY...
WE'VE GOT TO GO TO DAREDEVIL-- HE CAN'T HANDLE ALL OF THEM ALONE!
...BUT I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT.
...WHAT?
11

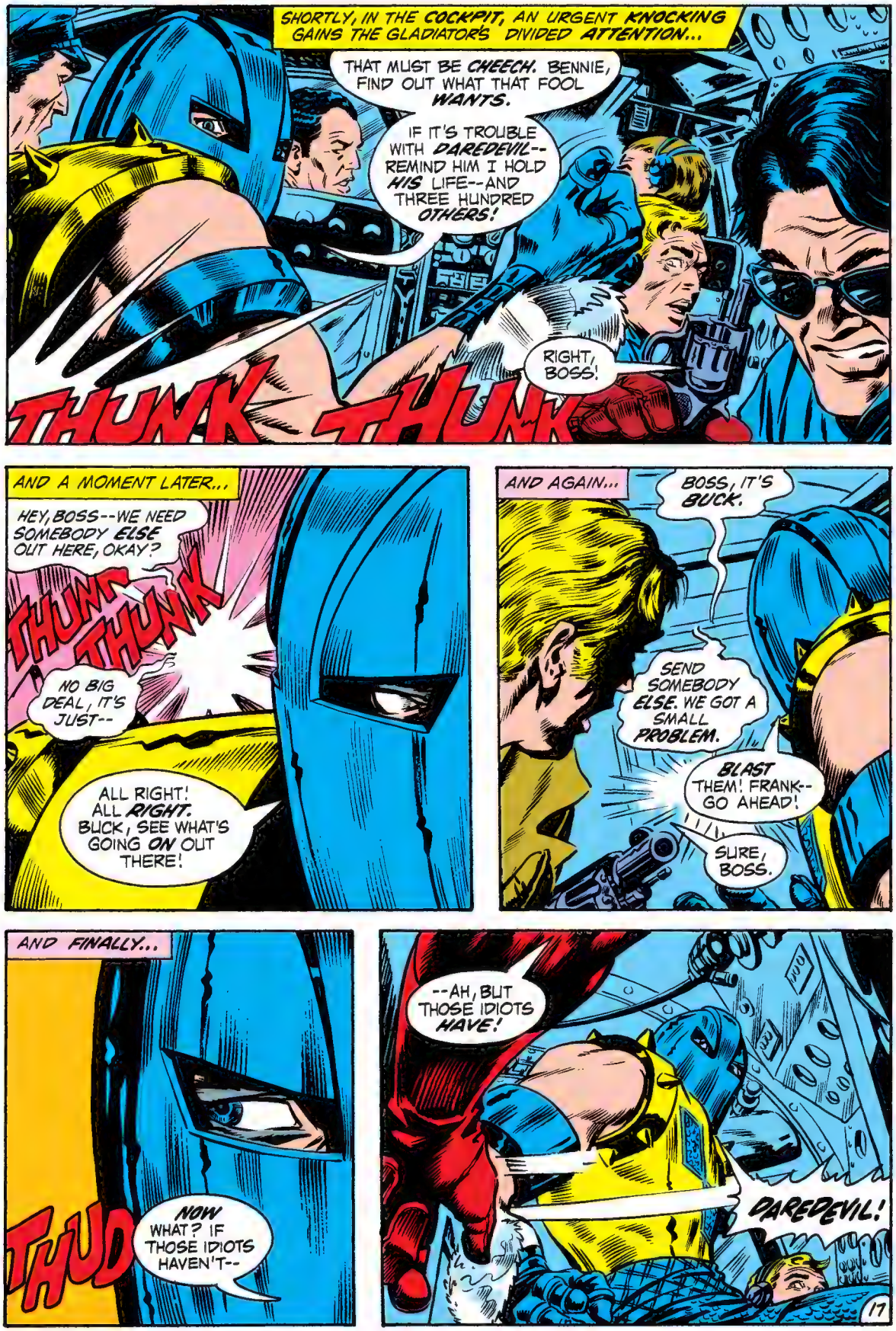

YOU'VE GOT A COUPLE'A STARS IN YOUR EYES, SISTER--
--AND THEY'RE BLINDING YOU TO A FEW FACTS!
I WON'T LET YOU BREAK YOUR SILLY LITTLE NECK--
"--NOT WHEN IT'S HORN-HEAD'S FIGHT!"
HOLY HANNAH! THE GLADIATOR'S GONE WILD!
HE HASN'T SAID ONE WORD SINCE WE STARTED THIS FRACAS--HE'S JUST KEPT SLICING AT ME--
--LIKE I WAS--A SIDE OF BEEF!
HEADS UP, SHINY-TOP...
CHOOM
WAK
--IT'S JUST ABOUT TIME-- FOR MY TURN!

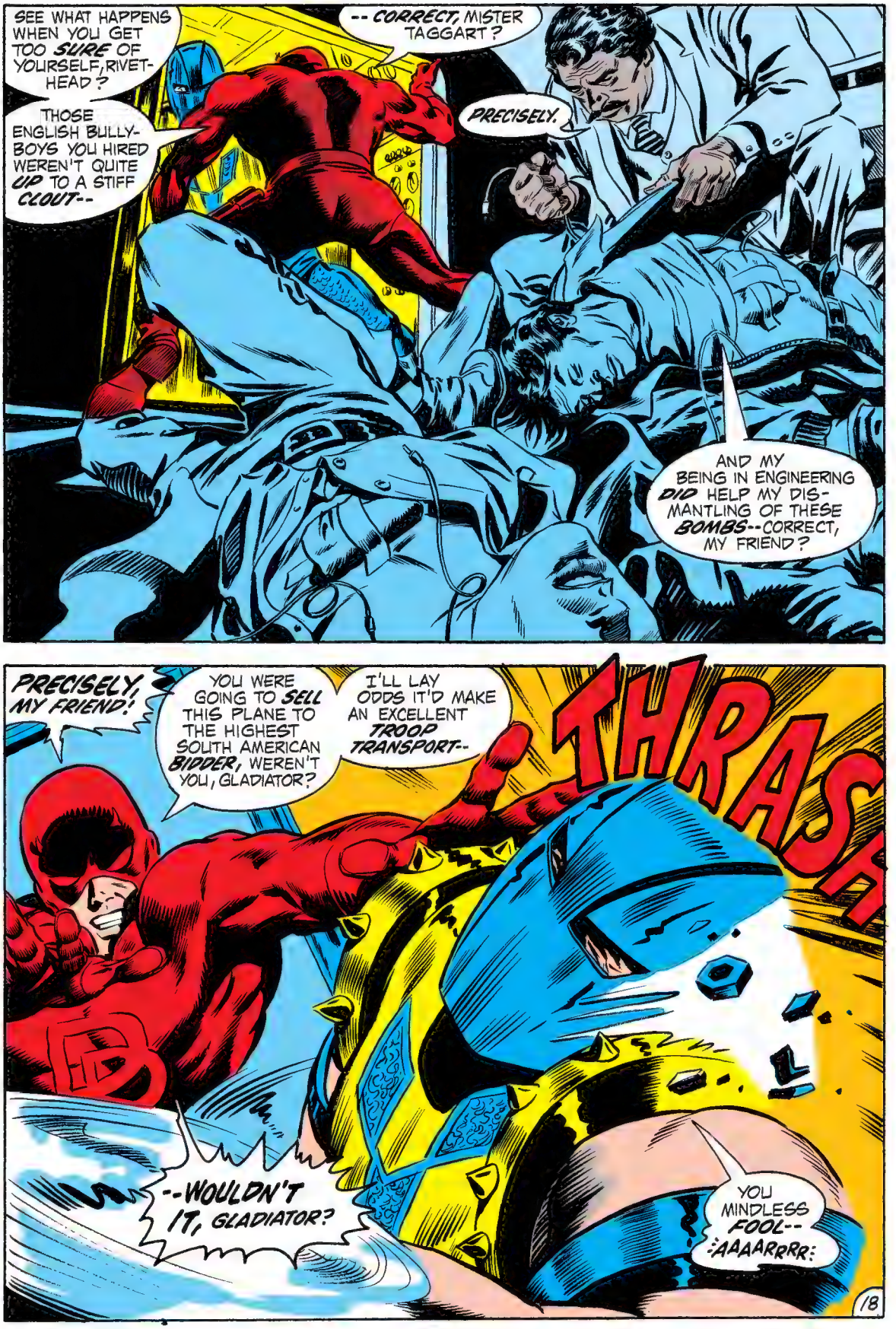

RIGHT--NOW I'VE DONE IT. THERE'S THREE HUNDRED PEOPLE ON THIS BIRD.
IF HE TRIES ANYTHING--
--I'VE GOT TO GIVE IN--!
YOU TALK A REAL GOOD SHOW, MISTER.
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN SORTA GOOD AT THAT, HAVEN'T YA?
WELL, BUSTER-- I NEED THIS PLANE. IT'LL SET ME UP REAL NICE.
BUT BELIEVE ME-- IF I DON'T GET IT--
--THERE AIN'T NOBODY GONNA BE LEFT TO TELL THEM HOW!
TAKE A LITTLE LOOK-SEE ON MY YOUNG FRIEND'S CHEST, BIG MAN...
...NOW TELL ME... WHAT DO YOU SEE?
GOOD LORD... NO!
YOU CALLED IT, BRIGHT EYES...
THAT'S A HALF POUND OF PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE, DAREDEVIL!


...JUST ENOUGH ON THE THREE OF 'EM TO BLOW US ALL BACK TO MERRIE OL' ENGLAND!
GOT THE POINT?
YOU'VE CHANGED SINCE WE LAST FOUGHT, GLADIATOR.
THE MAN I KNEW WAS RUTHLESS... BUT NO KILLER!
YEAH? WELL MAYBE I LEARNED SOMETHING ALL THAT TIME I SPENT IN JAIL, HERO.
...LIKE, NOBODY MEANS ANYTHING... IF HE'S STANDIN' IN YOUR WAY!
BUT--FOR NOW, BOYS--JUST TIE 'EM ALL UP!
AND SOON, THE GIANT AIRLINER TILTS, ITS GOLD AND EMERALD LIGHTS TWISTING AGAINST A MIDNIGHT SKY...
...AS IT STARTS ON ITS WAY SOUTHWARD, TO MEXICO!
BOEING 747
THE MINUTES CRAWL BY SLOWLY, UNTIL...
WELL, WELL--IF IT AIN'T THE FANCY LADY.
YOU GAVE ME A SMALL PAIN DOWN IN THAT LOUNGE, MISSIE--
--AND THINGS LIKE THAT-- I DON'T FORGET!
THAK
EASY, 'TASHA--
14

--DON'T LET THAT PUNK GET YOUR GOAT.
IVAN, YOU'RE MY FRIEND, AND I LOVE YOU--
--BUT PLEASE, MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS, ALL RIGHT?
OOOOO-BOY. I SEE IVAN'S NOT IMMUNE TO THE WIDOW'S TEMPER AFTER ALL.
MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING IN COMMON FOR US AT THAT.
...AND UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS...
...OLD IVAN MIGHT BE THINKING THE SELFSAME THING--
--UH-OH--!
SO WE'VE MORE GUESTS THAN I THOUGHT, EH?
I HEARD ABOUT YOU, MY DEAR--PERHAPS YOU'VE HEARD OF ME?
MY BRITISH FRIENDS HADN'T, WHEN I FIRST APPROACHED THEM WITH MY PLAN--
--BUT THEN, THE DOINGS OF AMERICAN CRIMINALS DON'T ALWAYS REACH THE CONTINENTAL PAPERS, DO THEY?
YET NOW--
YES, NOW I'LL HAVE THE FAME--
HEAR THAT, TOURISTS?
THERE AIN'T NOTHING YOU CAN DO!
--FAME TO JOIN THE RICHES THIS GAME WILL GAIN ME!
15

AHH, BUT ISN'T THERE, CHEECH? WHAT ABOUT A MAN YOU MISSED WHEN YOU DID YOUR CLEANING-UP--?
TAGGART! SOMEHOW THEY NEVER FOUND HIM... HE MUST HAVE BEEN HIDING IN THE LOUNGE!
IT'S UP TO HIM NOW--I DON'T DARE SAY A WORD!
HEY, DD... I SAW YOU CHANGE CLOTHES BEFORE--BUT YOU CAN BET I WON'T CHECK THE PASSENGER LIST FOR YOUR NAME OR ANY--
GOOD MAN, NAT! BUT HOLD IT--
--DON'T UNTIE THE WIDOW.
THIS JOB'S GOING TO BE DANGEROUS, AND I DON'T WANT HER INVOLVED.
OH, REALLY? WHAT MADE YOU THE ONE MAN ARMY, DAREDEVIL?
--DAREDEVIL?
ANSWER ME, BLAST YOU!
THE WIDOW'S REALLY FUMING... AND I CAN'T HONESTLY BLAME HER!
THERE'S NO REAL NEED TO KEEP HER OUT OF THE ACTION-- SAVE ONE MINOR PERSONAL ONE--
--I WANT IVAN ON MY SIDE A LITTLE LATER--
--AND IF THAT MAKES NATASHA A BIT MAD, WELL, I'LL JUST HAVE TO LIVE WITH IT!
NOW, TAGGART... HERE'S MY PLAN...!


SHORTLY, IN THE COCKPIT, AN URGENT KNOCKING GAINS THE GLADIATOR'S DIVIDED ATTENTION...
THAT MUST BE CHEECH. BENNIE, FIND OUT WHAT THAT FOOL WANTS.
IF IT'S TROUBLE WITH DAREDEVIL--REMIND HIM I HOLD HIS LIFE--AND THREE HUNDRED OTHERS!
RIGHT, BOSS!
THUNK THUNK
AND A MOMENT LATER...
HEY, BOSS--WE NEED SOMEBODY ELSE OUT HERE, OKAY?
THUNK THUNK
NO BIG DEAL, IT'S JUST--
ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT. BUCK, SEE WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE!
AND AGAIN...
BOSS, IT'S BUCK.
SEND SOMEBODY ELSE. WE GOT A SMALL PROBLEM.
BLAST THEM! FRANK--GO AHEAD!
SURE, BOSS.
AND FINALLY...
THUD
NOW WHAT? IF THOSE IDIOTS HAVEN'T--
--AH, BUT THOSE IDIOTS HAVE!
DAREDEVIL!
17


SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET TOO SURE OF YOURSELF, RIVET-HEAD?
THOSE ENGLISH BULLY-BOYS YOU HIRED WEREN'T QUITE UP TO A STIFF CLOUT--
-- CORRECT, MISTER TAGGART?
PRECISELY.
AND MY BEING IN ENGINEERING DID HELP MY DISMANTLING OF THESE BOMBS--CORRECT, MY FRIEND?
PRECISELY, MY FRIEND!
YOU WERE GOING TO SELL THIS PLANE TO THE HIGHEST SOUTH AMERICAN BIDDER, WEREN'T YOU, GLADIATOR?
I'LL LAY ODDS IT'D MAKE AN EXCELLENT TROOP TRANSPORT--
THRASH
--WOULDN'T IT, GLADIATOR?
YOU MINDLESS FOOL--
:AAAARRRR:

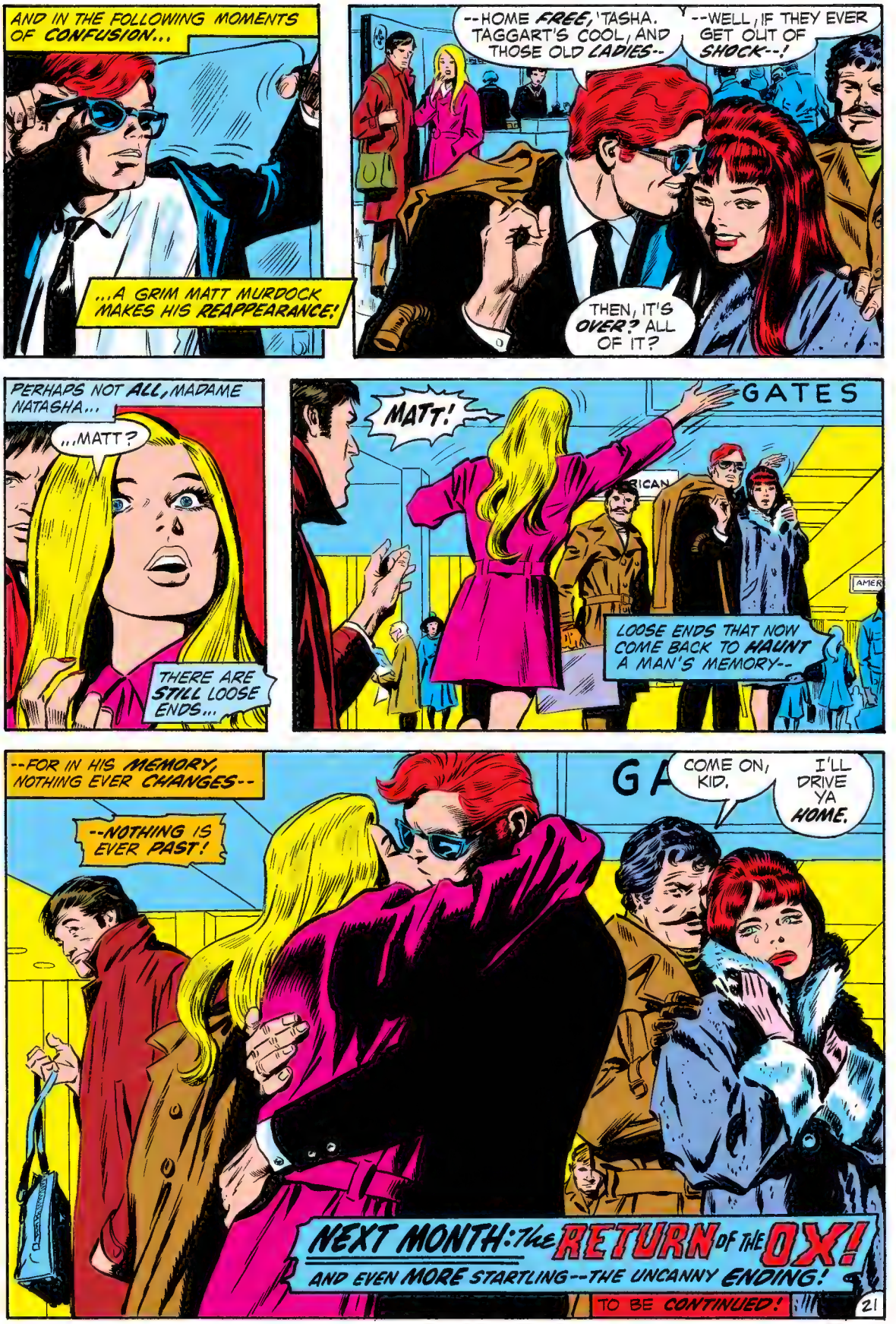
ONCE YOU USED TO BE A BITTER COSTUME DESIGNER, CHUCKLES--
--AND MAYBE, JUST A LITTLE, A GUY COULD ADMIRE YOUR GUTS--
YOU WEREN'T AFRAID TO TAKE ON A WHOLE PRISON--
*DAREDEVIL #63--STAN

--YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WANTED, SO YOU TOOK IT!
MAYBE IT WASN'T SO NOBLE--

--BUT, FELLA, IT WAS A LOT BETTER THAN ENDANGERING THE LIVES OF THREE HUNDRED PEOPLE--

WHAM
--'CAUSE THAT I DON'T BUY AT ALL!

--AND THAT'S THE STORY, DD. THAT LAST SLASH OF HIS CUT THROUGH THE LANDING GEAR CONTROLS--AND THE RADAR!
WE HAVEN'T GOT A CHANCE!
WRONG, FRIEND, YOU GET US CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE GROUND..
--AND I'LL GUIDE US THE REST OF THE WAY.!
BUT--
CUT.! DON'T ARGUE, MAN! DO IT.!
RADAR SENSE--DON'T FAIL ME NOW.
FUNNY... THIS MAY BE MY LAST MOMENT ALIVE..
...AND YET, THE FACE I KEEP SEEING... JUST ISN'T NATASHA'S!
BUT I'VE NO TIME FOR THAT--
PULL THAT LEFT WING UP! BLAST IT, MOVE!
UH, DAREDEVIL--? I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW--
IF WE GET OUT OF THIS, YOUR SECRET'S SAFE, YOU CATCH MY MEANING?
...THANKS, TAGGART... BUT FRANKLY...
747
AND, WELL, LOOK-- EVEN IF WE DON'T, IT'S STILL SAFE WITH--
747
SKRASSSSSSSH
20


AND IN THE FOLLOWING MOMENTS OF CONFUSION...
...A GRIM MATT MURDOCK MAKES HIS REAPPEARANCE!
--HOME FREE, 'TASHA. TAGGART'S COOL, AND THOSE OLD LADIES--
--WELL, IF THEY EVER GET OUT OF SHOCK--!
THEN, IT'S OVER? ALL OF IT?
PERHAPS NOT ALL, MADAME NATASHA...
...MATT?
THERE ARE STILL LOOSE ENDS...
MATT!
GATES
LOOSE ENDS THAT NOW COME BACK TO HAUNT A MAN'S MEMORY--
--FOR IN HIS MEMORY, NOTHING EVER CHANGES--
--NOTHING IS EVER PAST!
COME ON, KID.
I'LL DRIVE YA HOME.
NEXT MONTH: The RETURN OF THE OX!
AND EVEN MORE STARTLING--THE UNCANNY ENDING!
TO BE CONTINUED!
21

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
20¢
86
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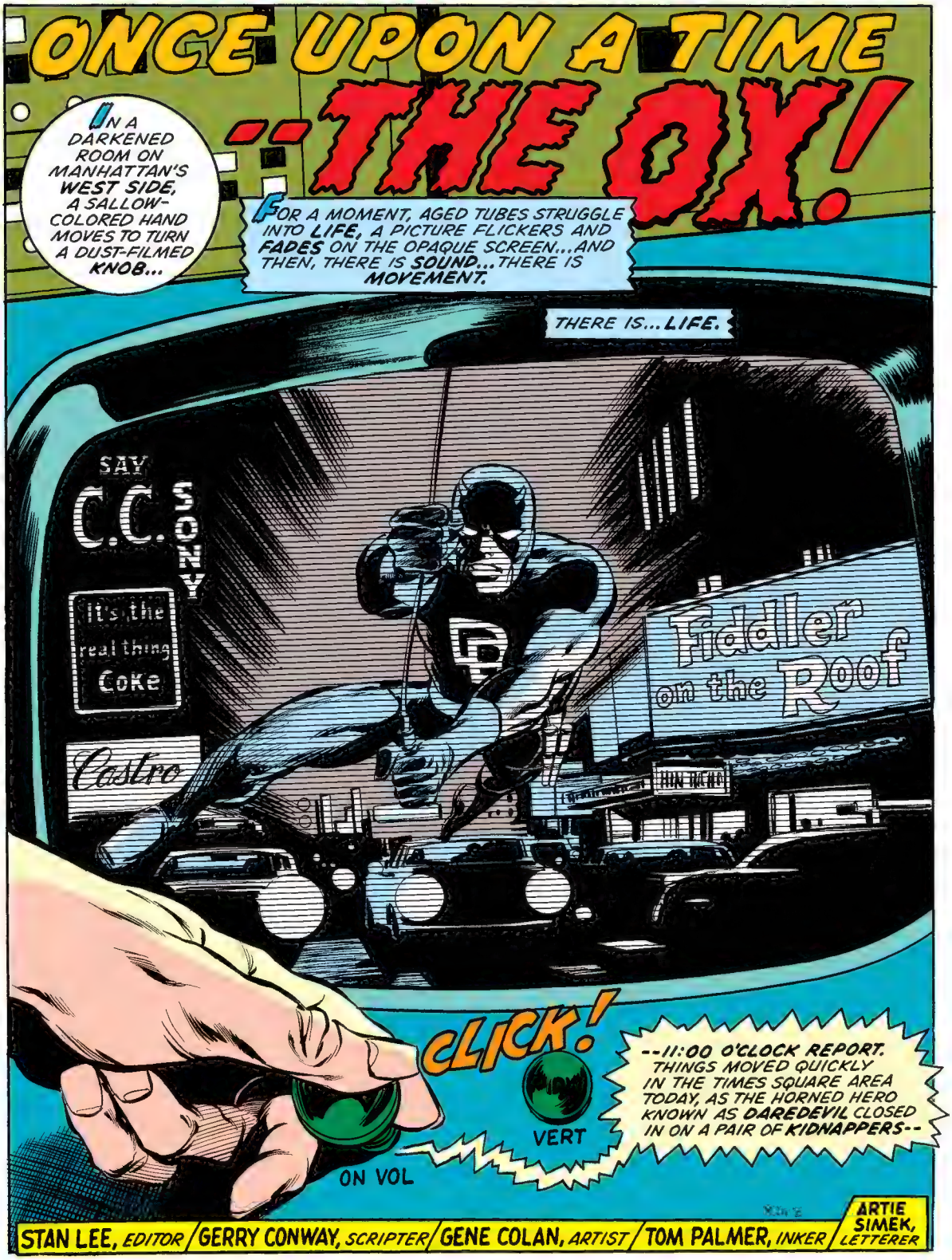
DAREDEVIL™
THE MAN ... OUT FEAR!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
NO! DON'T LEAP OUT THE WINDOW!
IT'S THIRTY FLOORS TO THE STREET--STRAIGHT DOWN!!
TOO LATE, FOOL!
I'M DYING--AND I'M TAKING YOU WITH ME!!
THE OX STRIKES AGAIN!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™

ONCE UPON A TIME --THE OX!


IN A DARKENED ROOM ON MANHATTAN'S WEST SIDE, A SALLOW-COLORED HAND MOVES TO TURN A DUST-FILMED KNOB...
FOR A MOMENT, AGED TUBES STRUGGLE INTO LIFE, A PICTURE FLICKERS AND FADES ON THE OPAQUE SCREEN...AND THEN, THERE IS SOUND...THERE IS MOVEMENT.
THERE IS...LIFE.
SAY C.C. SONY
It's the real thing Coke
Castro
Fiddler on the Roof
CLICK!
VERT
ON VOL
--11:00 O'CLOCK REPORT. THINGS MOVED QUICKLY IN THE TIMES SQUARE AREA TODAY, AS THE HORNED HERO KNOWN AS DAREDEVIL CLOSED IN ON A PAIR OF KIDNAPPERS--

STAN LEE, *EDITOR* / GERRY CONWAY, *SCRIPTER* / GENE COLAN, *ARTIST* / TOM PALMER, *INKER* / ARTIE SIMEK, *LETTERER*

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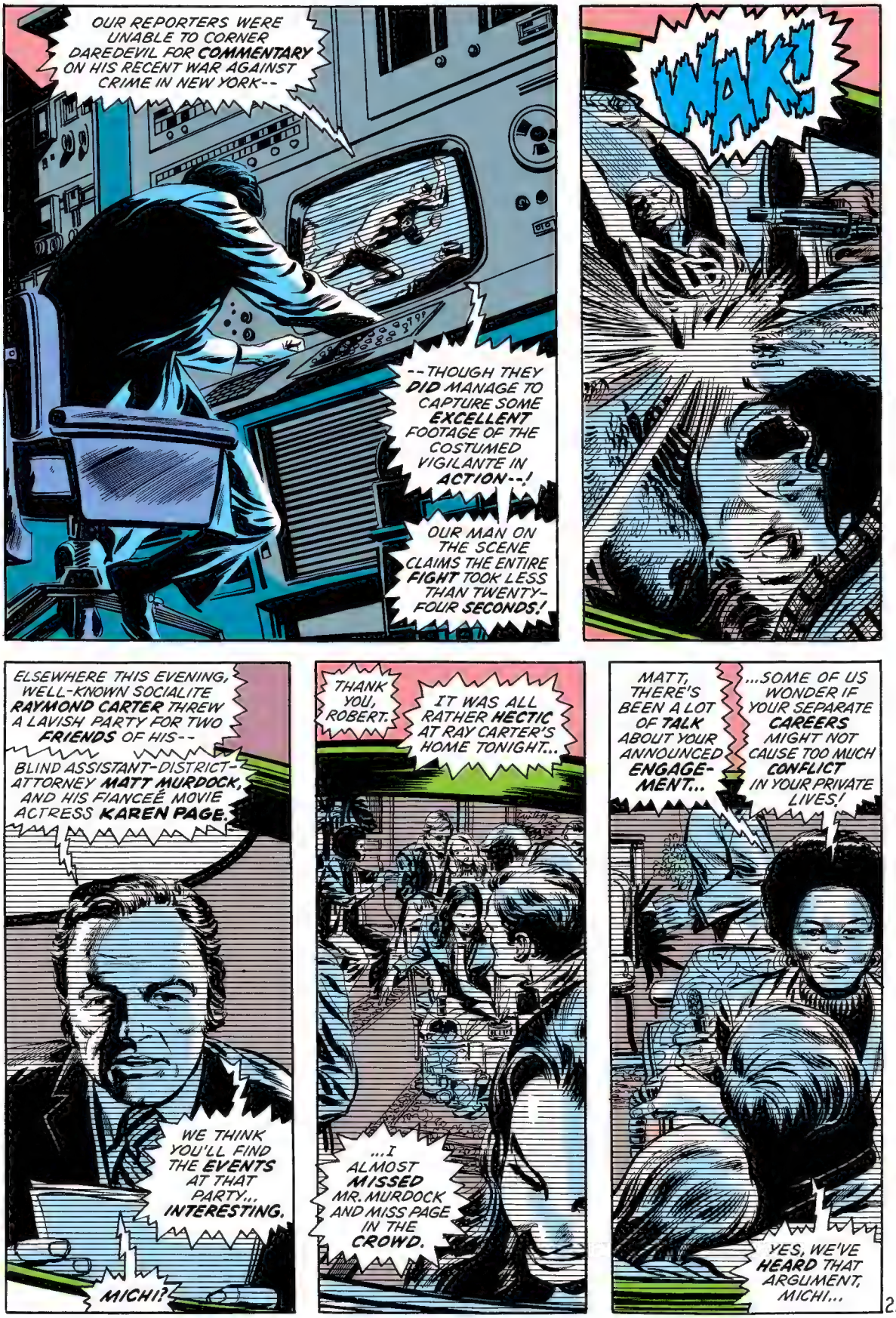
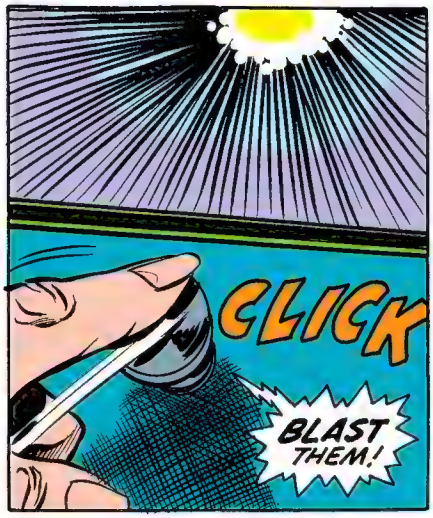
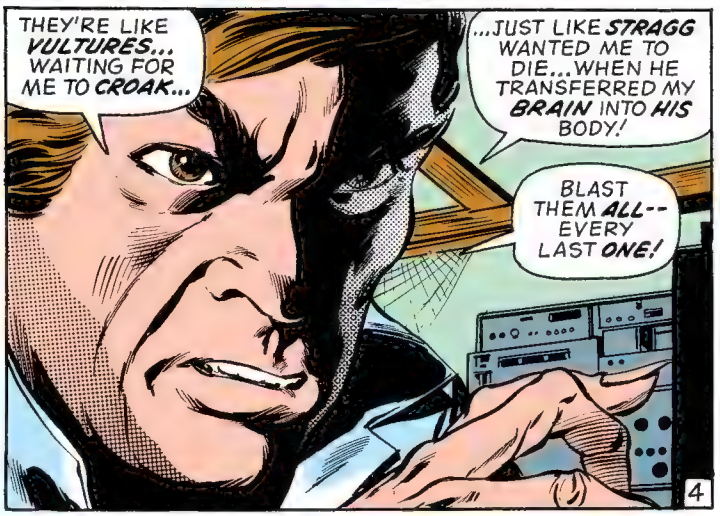

OUR REPORTERS WERE UNABLE TO CORNER DAREDEVIL FOR COMMENTARY ON HIS RECENT WAR AGAINST CRIME IN NEW YORK--
--THOUGH THEY DID MANAGE TO CAPTURE SOME EXCELLENT FOOTAGE OF THE COSTUMED VIGILANTE IN ACTION--!
OUR MAN ON THE SCENE CLAIMS THE ENTIRE FIGHT TOOK LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR SECONDS!
WAK!
ELSEWHERE THIS EVENING, WELL-KNOWN SOCIALITE RAYMOND CARTER THREW A LAVISH PARTY FOR TWO FRIENDS OF HIS--
BLIND ASSISTANT-DISTRICT-ATTORNEY MATT MURDOCK, AND HIS FIANCEÉ MOVIE ACTRESS KAREN PAGE.
WE THINK YOU'LL FIND THE EVENTS AT THAT PARTY... INTERESTING.
MICHI?
THANK YOU, ROBERT.
IT WAS ALL RATHER HECTIC AT RAY CARTER'S HOME TONIGHT...
...I ALMOST MISSED MR. MURDOCK AND MISS PAGE IN THE CROWD.
MATT, THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF TALK ABOUT YOUR ANNOUNCED ENGAGE-MENT...
...SOME OF US WONDER IF YOUR SEPARATE CAREERS MIGHT NOT CAUSE TOO MUCH CONFLICT IN YOUR PRIVATE LIVES!
YES, WE'VE HEARD THAT ARGUMENT, MICHI...

...AND WE'VE GOT ONE OF OUR OWN.
KAREN AND I LOVE EACH OTHER...AND WE'VE JUST REDISCOVERED OURSELVES AFTER A LONG SEPARATION!
...AND THAT'S SOMETHING WE WON'T LET HAPPEN AGAIN!
"I ALSO CAME ACROSS FRANKLIN NELSON, THE D.A....AND WHEN I QUESTIONED HIM ABOUT HIS DECISION TO RESIGN..."
...NOT TALK ABOUT IT, MISS TAYLOR.
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME....!
OH-- MISTER NELSON--!
SORRY, MADAME NATASHA. SORRY...ABOUT A LOT OF THINGS.
BUMP!
THERE'S TALK YOU'RE THE CAUSE OF MISTER NELSON'S RESIGNATION, MADAME NATASHA...
YOUR RECENT TRIAL FOR MURDER....?
BELIEVE ME, THE BLACK WIDOW IS AWARE OF THAT TALK.
...AND FRANKLY, I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF IT... OF BEING STARED AT... AND OF BEING HARASSED!
TAKE IT EASY, KID...
...YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IT ANYMORE...
THERE'S ONE MAN WHO'LL SEE TO THAT.
I UNDER-STAND SHE'S MOVING TO SAN FRANCISCO, MATT...
REALLY....?

AND CAN ANYONE BLAME HER? EVEN THOUGH ACQUITTED...
...MADAME NATASHA MUST STILL WALK IN THE SHADOW OF HER TRIAL.
IN ALL, ROBERT, I'D SAY RAY CARTER'S PARTY WAS MORE THAN INTERESTING... WOULDN'T YOU?
PERHAPS NOT HALF AS INTERESTING AS SOMETHING WHICH HAPPENED UPSTATE THIS AFTERNOON...
...AS DOCTOR KARL STRAGG WAS RELEASED ON PAROLE FROM THE STATE PRISON!
NO DOUBT YOU KNOW OF THE DOCTOR'S RECENT ACCIDENT...
...ONE THAT OCCURRED WHILE HE ACTED AS A GUINEA PIG FOR TESTS OF CERTAIN PHARMACEUTICAL ISOTOPES....!
DOCTOR STRAGG HAS LESS THAN A MONTH TO LIVE...
...AND BECAUSE OF THESE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES, STRAGG WILL BE ALLOWED TO SPEND THOSE WEEKS AS A FREE MAN...
...AS FREE AS A MAN CAN BE... WHEN HE KNOWS HE'S GOING TO DIE.

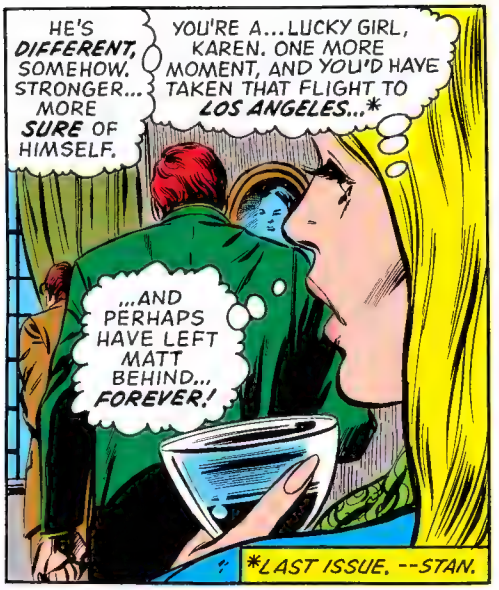

CLICK
BLAST THEM!

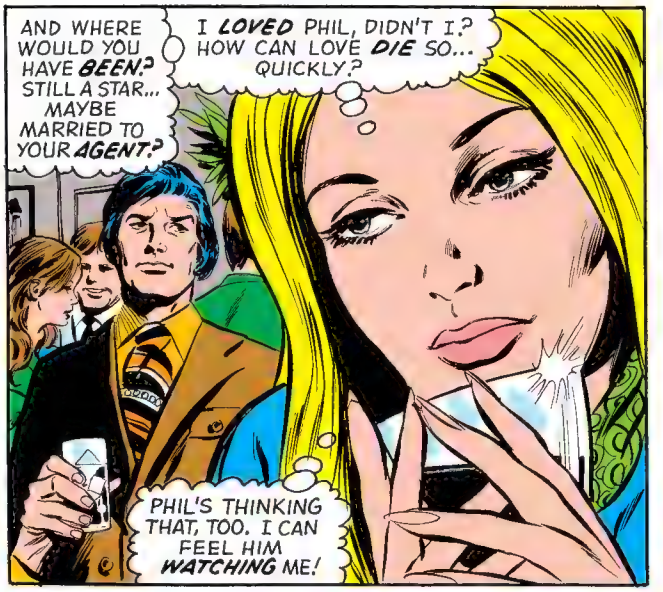

THEY'RE LIKE VULTURES... WAITING FOR ME TO CROAK...
...JUST LIKE STRAGG WANTED ME TO DIE...WHEN HE TRANSFERRED MY BRAIN INTO HIS BODY!
BLAST THEM ALL-- EVERY LAST ONE!

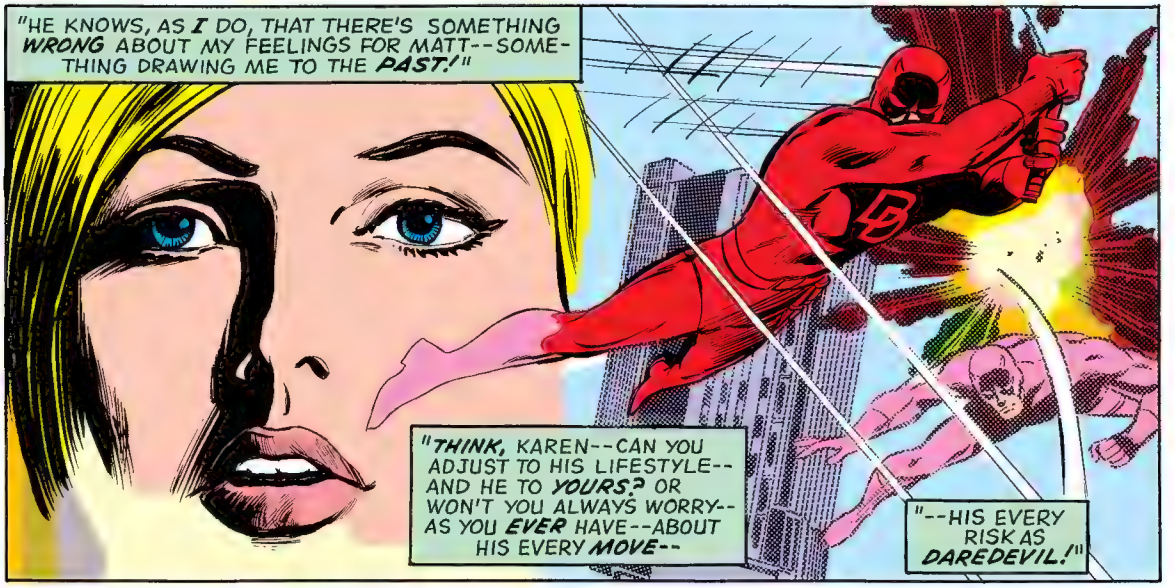
ONCE I COULD HAVE CRUSHED THEM...BUT THAT WAS YEARS AGO, WHEN I WAS DIFFERENT...
...WHEN MEN STILL TREMBLED BEFORE THE OX!*
STRAGG TOOK CONTROL OF MY BODY--LEFT ME TO ROT IN HIS OWN PUNY SHELL--
--AND THEN HE WAS KILLED--TRAPPING ME FOREVER!
NOW IT'S MY TURN...MY TURN TO DIE!

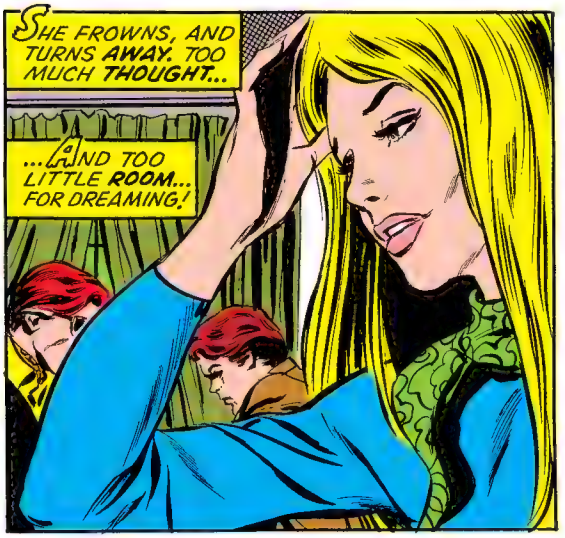
*IT ALL HAPPENED 'WAY BACK IN DD #15, BIBLIOPHILES.--STAN.

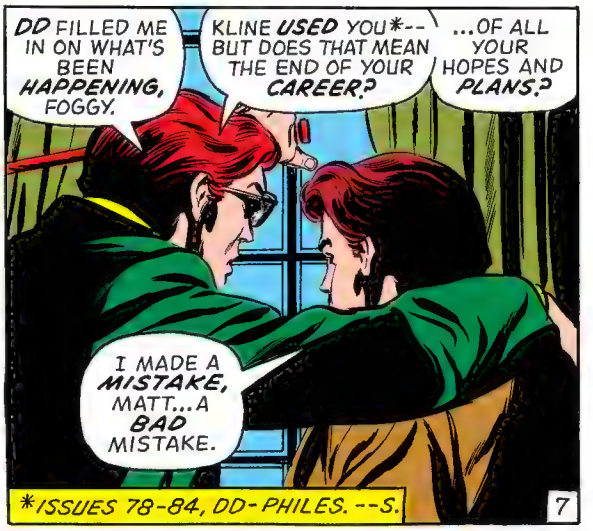
HE FALLS TO HIS KNEES, THIS KARL LUDWIG STRAGG--AND HIS BODY QUAKES, RIDDEN WITH TREMORS FROM WITHIN--
--FROM WITHIN--FROM THE BURIED ID OF THE MIND WHICH NOW INHABITS THIS FEEBLE BODY--
--THE MIND OF ANOTHER MAN--
--A LOST SOUL RELEASED BY THE UNCANNY TISSUE REACTIONS WRACKING STRAGG'S INFECTED FORM!
THE SHADOWS OF THE ROOM SEEM TO MELT AND RUN ABOUT THE GROWING MAN-MONSTER--
--UNTIL THE SHADOWS FADE, AND DARK FEATURES REPLACE THEM...FEATURES MOST FAMILIAR...THE FEATURES OF...
...THE OX!
HURTIN'... HURTIN' ALL OVER! FEEL... LIKE I'M BUSTIN' APART!
THEM... THEY DID THIS TO ME! PUT ME IN JAIL-- HOOKED ME UP WITH STRAGG!
MURDOCK! MURDOCK AND THAT FAT FRIEND OF HIS--! SO HELP ME--
"--THE OX IS GONNA MAKE 'EM PAY!"
--SEE WHAT YOU MEAN ABOUT THIS STAR BUSINESS, KAREN!
RATHER HEADY, AT THAT!
YOU'LL GET USED TO IT, MATT--OUT IN L.A.!
BUT, I'M WORRIED ABOUT FOGGY! I THINK--
...HE NEEDS A FRIENDLY HAND?
RIGHT, LITTLE LADY. 'SCUSE?
SURE, MATT.
6

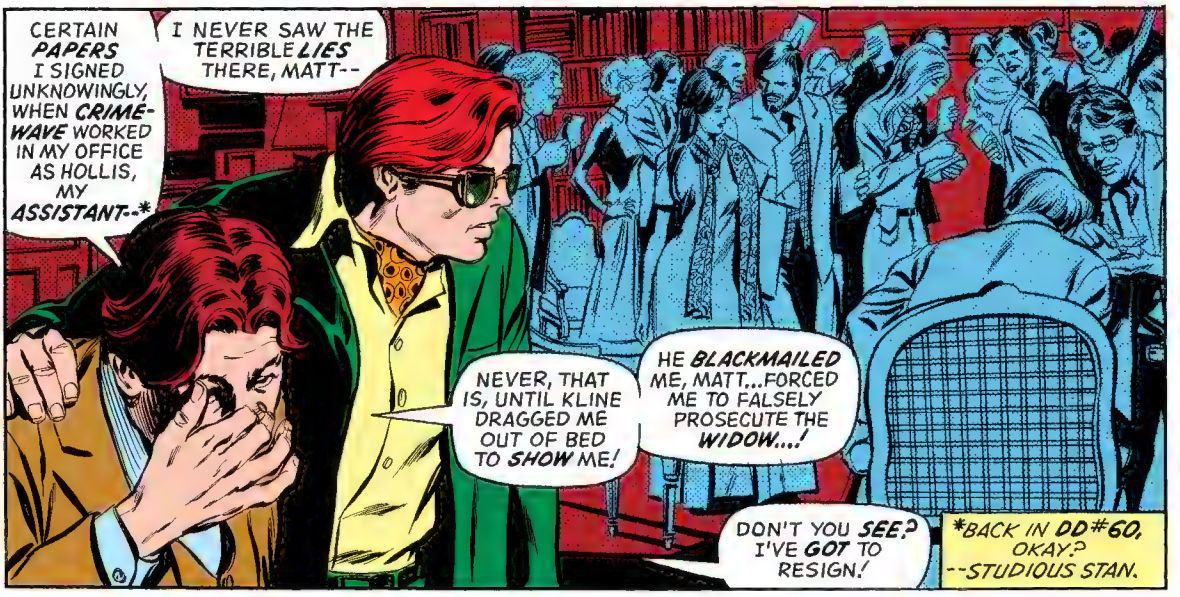

HE'S DIFFERENT, SOMEHOW. STRONGER... MORE SURE OF HIMSELF.
YOU'RE A...LUCKY GIRL, KAREN. ONE MORE MOMENT, AND YOU'D HAVE TAKEN THAT FLIGHT TO LOS ANGELES...*
...AND PERHAPS HAVE LEFT MATT BEHIND... FOREVER!
*LAST ISSUE. --STAN.


AND WHERE WOULD YOU HAVE BEEN? STILL A STAR... MAYBE MARRIED TO YOUR AGENT?
I LOVED PHIL, DIDN'T I? HOW CAN LOVE DIE SO... QUICKLY?
PHIL'S THINKING THAT, TOO. I CAN FEEL HIM WATCHING ME!

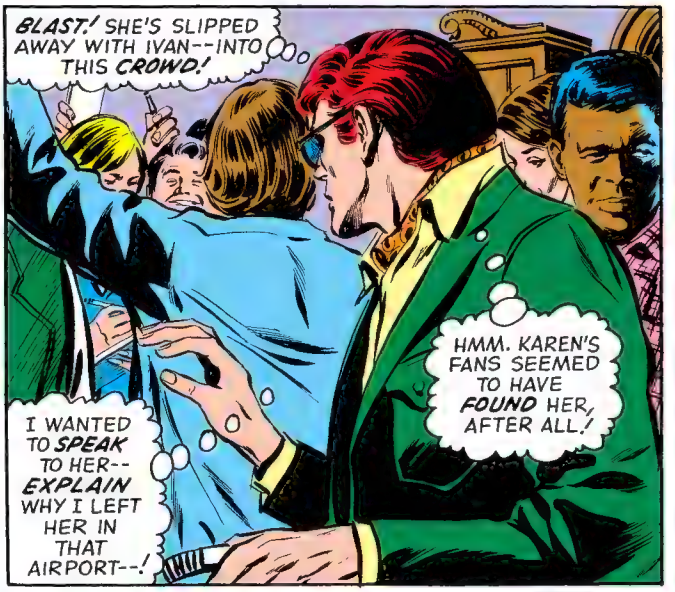

"HE KNOWS, AS I DO, THAT THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG ABOUT MY FEELINGS FOR MATT--SOMETHING DRAWING ME TO THE PAST!"
"THINK, KAREN--CAN YOU ADJUST TO HIS LIFESTYLE--AND HE TO YOURS? OR WON'T YOU ALWAYS WORRY--AS YOU EVER HAVE--ABOUT HIS EVERY MOVE--
"--HIS EVERY RISK AS DAREDEVIL!"

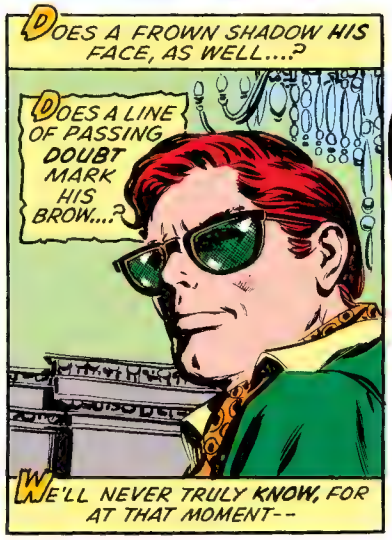

SHE FROWNS, AND TURNS AWAY. TOO MUCH THOUGHT...
...AND TOO LITTLE ROOM... FOR DREAMING!


DD FILLED ME IN ON WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING, FOGGY.
KLINE USED YOU*--BUT DOES THAT MEAN THE END OF YOUR CAREER?
...OF ALL YOUR HOPES AND PLANS?
I MADE A MISTAKE, MATT...A BAD MISTAKE.
*ISSUES 78-84, DD-PHILES. --S.


CERTAIN PAPERS I SIGNED UNKNOWINGLY, WHEN CRIME-WAVE WORKED IN MY OFFICE AS HOLLIS, MY ASSISTANT--*
I NEVER SAW THE TERRIBLE LIES THERE, MATT--
NEVER, THAT IS, UNTIL KLINE DRAGGED ME OUT OF BED TO SHOW ME!
HE BLACKMAILED ME, MATT...FORCED ME TO FALSELY PROSECUTE THE WIDOW...!
DON'T YOU SEE? I'VE GOT TO RESIGN!
*BACK IN DD#60, OKAY? --STUDIOUS STAN.

WRONG, MR. NELSON. YOU'VE GOT TO REBUILD.
MAYBE YOU CAN CORRECT THOSE MISTAKES...FOR YOUR PUBLIC...AND MOST OF ALL... FOR YOURSELF!
AND WHAT ABOUT MY MISTAKES? WHAT ABOUT NATASHA?


BLAST! SHE'S SLIPPED AWAY WITH IVAN--INTO THIS CROWD!
HMM. KAREN'S FANS SEEMED TO HAVE FOUND HER, AFTER ALL!
I WANTED TO SPEAK TO HER-- EXPLAIN WHY I LEFT HER IN THAT AIRPORT--!


DOES A FROWN SHADOW HIS FACE, AS WELL...?
DOES A LINE OF PASSING DOUBT MARK HIS BROW...?
WE'LL NEVER TRULY KNOW, FOR AT THAT MOMENT--

CRASH
THAT SOUND-- FROM THE WINDOW! WHAT IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN--?

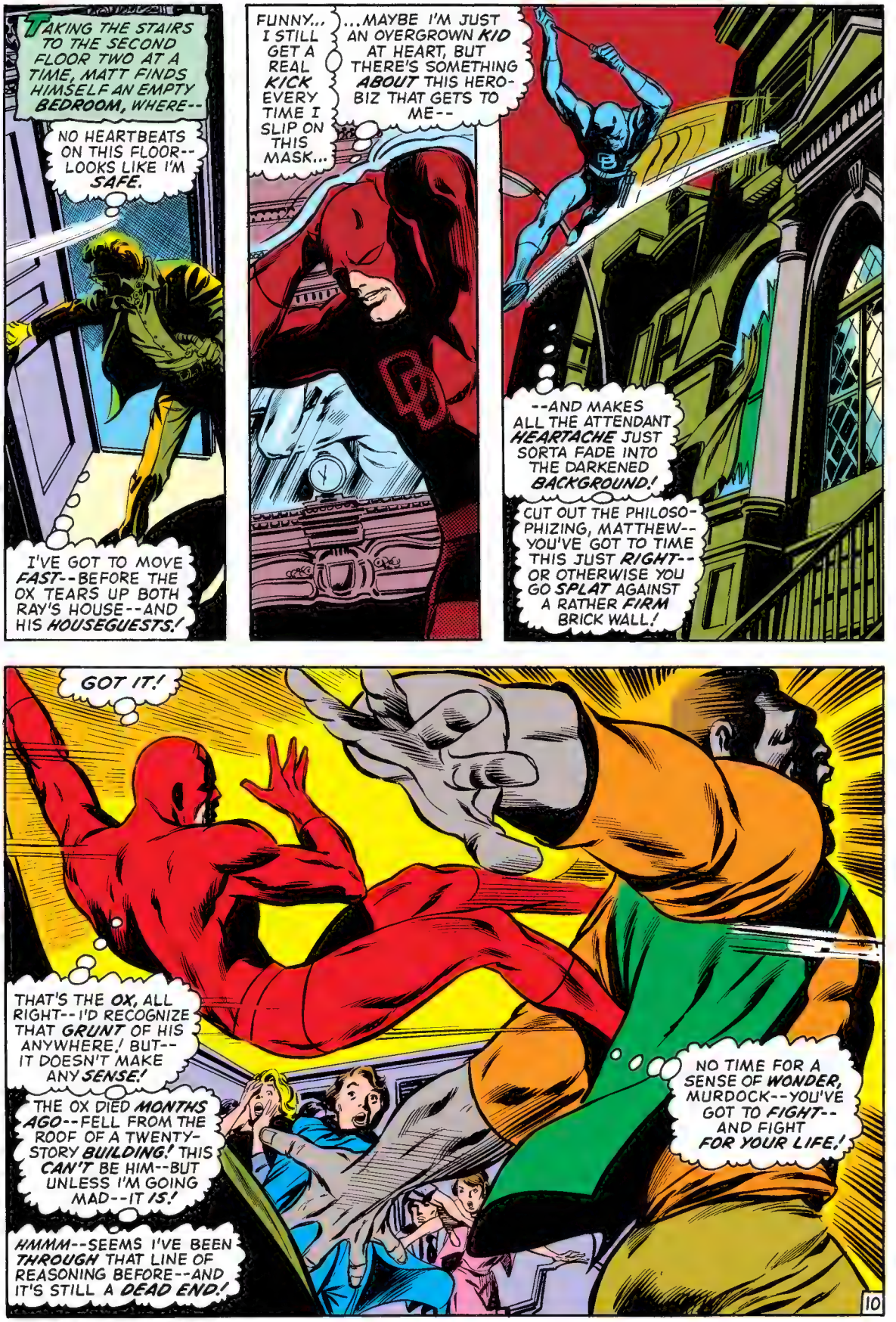
"THAT HEARTBEAT--I KNOW IT FROM SOMEWHERE--BUT IT'S IMPOSSIBLY STRONG, SO INCREDIBLY LOUD--!
"AND THE SOUND OF ITS BREATHING--LIKE THE ROAR OF A HURRICANE! WHOEVER IT IS--HE'S HUGE--A GIANT OF SOME SORT--
"WAIT--HE'S MOVING TOWARD FOGGY, SNARLING SOMETHING I CAN'T QUITE MAKE OUT--! HE'S GOING TO--"

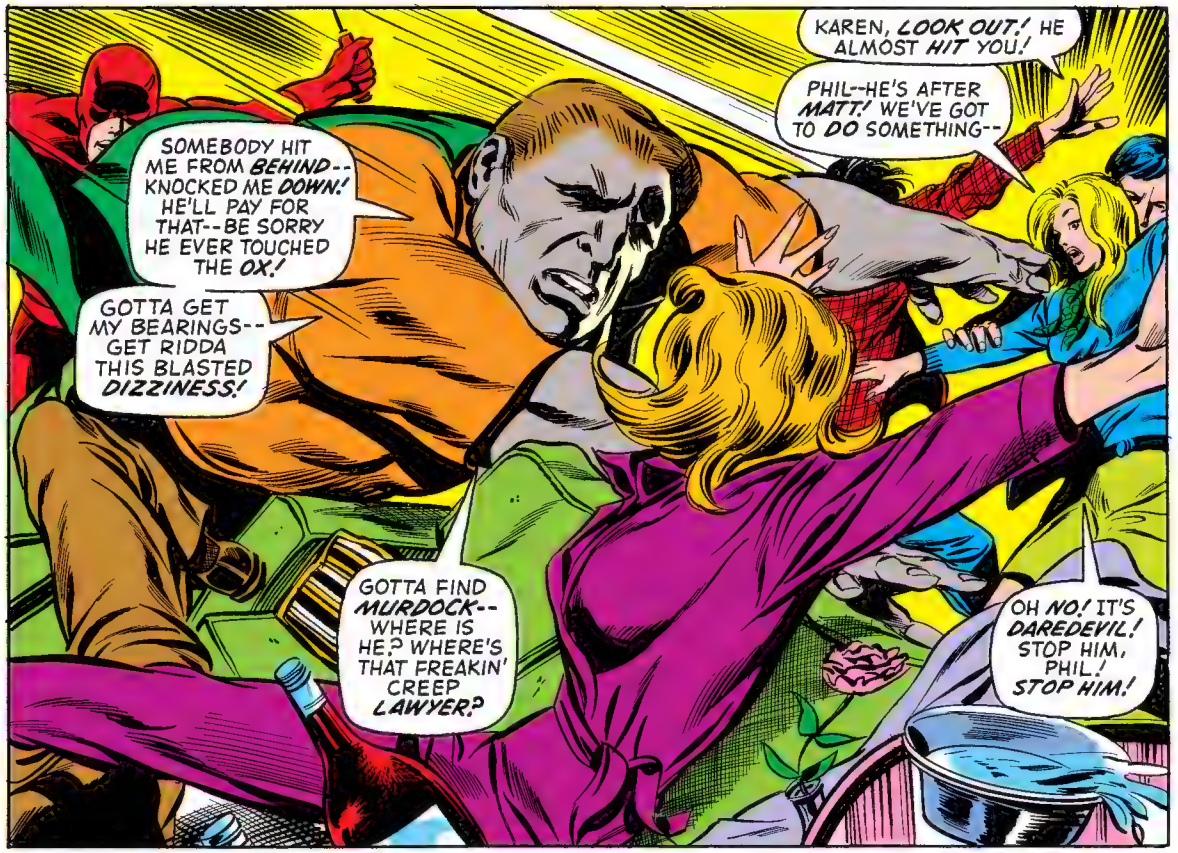
"NO! FOGGY MOVED RIGHT INTO THAT BLOW--BUT WHY? WHO IS THAT THING--? WHO?"
WAK
EVERYBODY--GET OUTTA THE WAY--DON'T LET HIM NEAR YO--
-UNNNNNH!-

SOMETHING'S BLURRING MY RADAR SENSE--CAN'T GET A CLEAR IMAGE!
GOOD LORD--UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS, WHOEVER THAT IS--
--HE'S SHOOTING OFF RADIATION LIKE AN ATOMIC PILE!

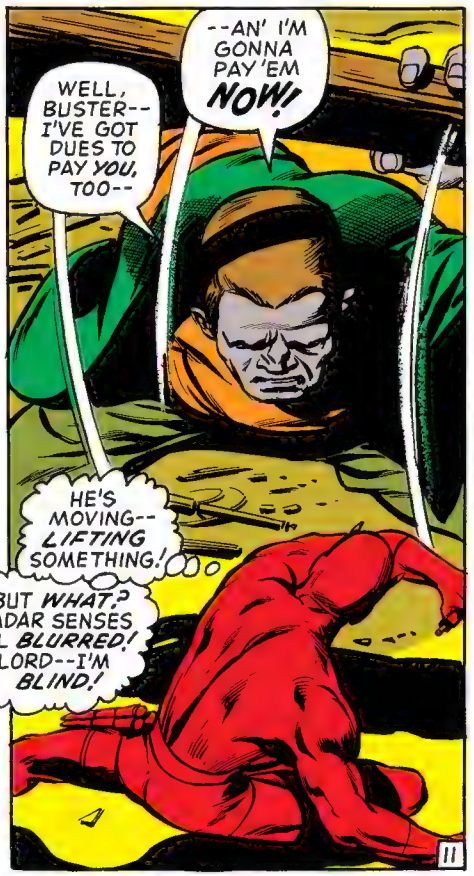
"HOLD IT--I CAN JUST BARELY SENSE HIS SHAPE--BUT IT CAN'T BE!
"HE'S DEAD! I WAS THERE WHEN HE FELL FROM THAT ROOFTOP--!"

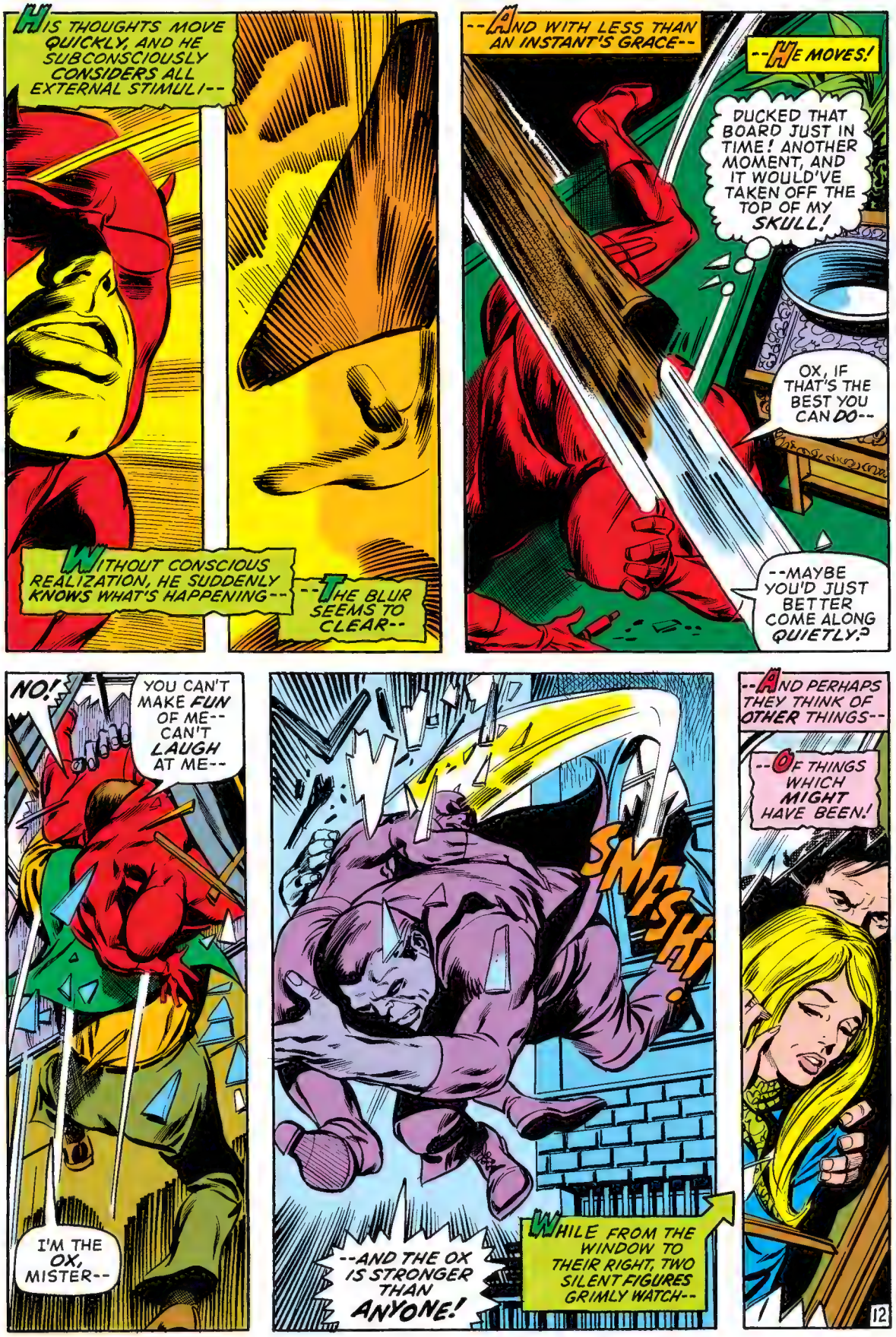
BUT FACE IT, MATTHEW--EITHER YOU'RE FLIPPED OUT OF YOUR MIND--
--OR THAT'S--THE OX!
GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS CROWD--SWITCH TO DAREDEVIL! THAT MAY BE OUR ONLY CHANCE!

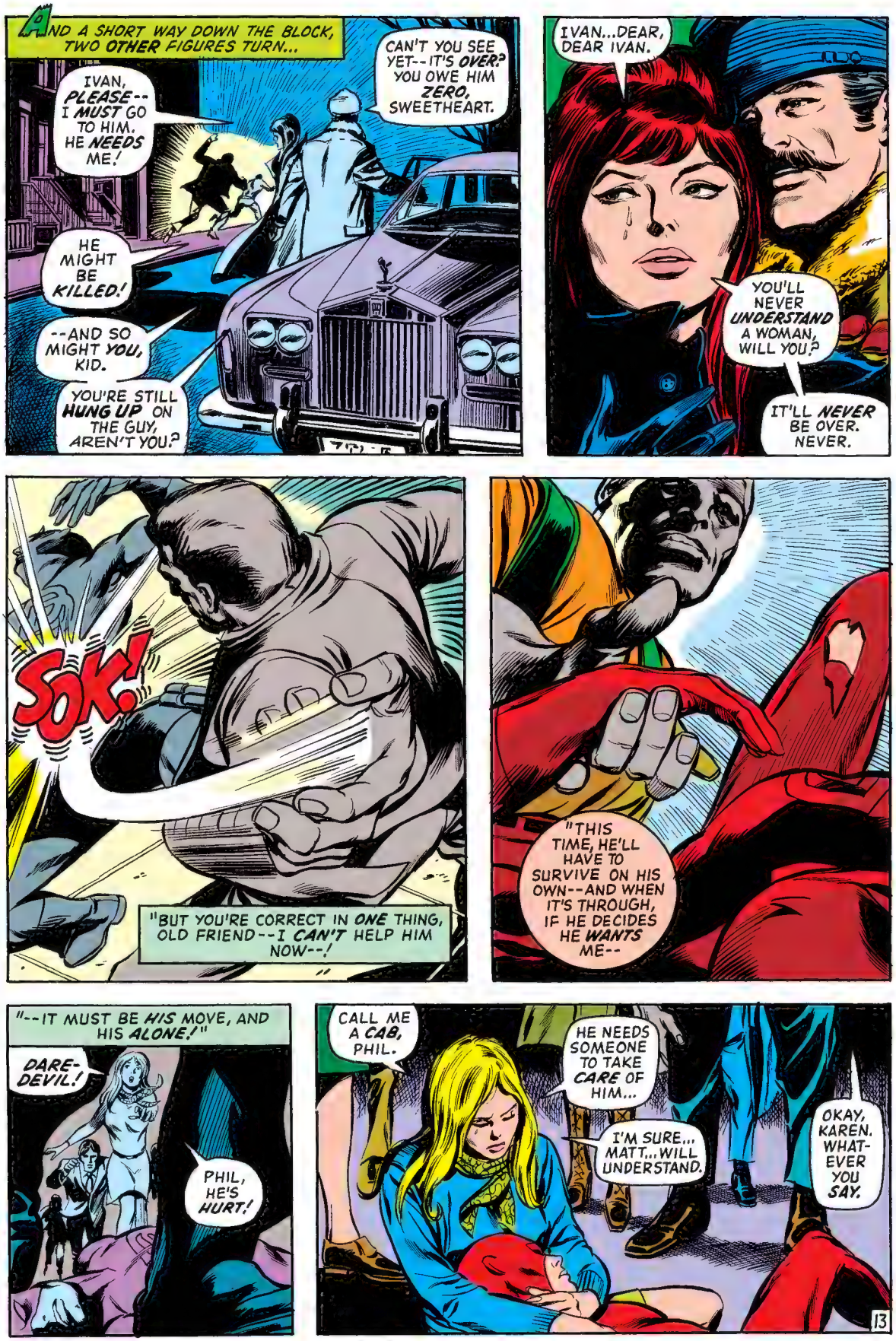

TAKING THE STAIRS TO THE SECOND FLOOR TWO AT A TIME, MATT FINDS HIMSELF AN EMPTY BEDROOM, WHERE--
NO HEARTBEATS ON THIS FLOOR--LOOKS LIKE I'M SAFE.
I'VE GOT TO MOVE FAST--BEFORE THE OX TEARS UP BOTH RAY'S HOUSE--AND HIS HOUSEGUESTS!
FUNNY... I STILL GET A REAL KICK EVERY TIME I SLIP ON THIS MASK...
...MAYBE I'M JUST AN OVERGROWN KID AT HEART, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS HERO-BIZ THAT GETS TO ME--
--AND MAKES ALL THE ATTENDANT HEARTACHE JUST SORTA FADE INTO THE DARKENED BACKGROUND!
CUT OUT THE PHILOSOPHIZING, MATTHEW--YOU'VE GOT TO TIME THIS JUST RIGHT--OR OTHERWISE YOU GO SPLAT AGAINST A RATHER FIRM BRICK WALL!
GOT IT!
THAT'S THE OX, ALL RIGHT--I'D RECOGNIZE THAT GRUNT OF HIS ANYWHERE! BUT--IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE!
THE OX DIED MONTHS AGO--FELL FROM THE ROOF OF A TWENTY-STORY BUILDING! THIS CAN'T BE HIM--BUT UNLESS I'M GOING MAD--IT IS!
HMMM--SEEMS I'VE BEEN THROUGH THAT LINE OF REASONING BEFORE--AND IT'S STILL A DEAD END!
NO TIME FOR A SENSE OF WONDER, MURDOCK--YOU'VE GOT TO FIGHT--AND FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE!
10


KAREN, LOOK OUT! HE ALMOST HIT YOU!
PHIL--HE'S AFTER MATT! WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING--
SOMEBODY HIT ME FROM BEHIND--KNOCKED ME DOWN! HE'LL PAY FOR THAT--BE SORRY HE EVER TOUCHED THE OX!
GOTTA GET MY BEARINGS--GET RIDDA THIS BLASTED DIZZINESS!
GOTTA FIND MURDOCK--WHERE IS HE? WHERE'S THAT FREAKIN' CREEP LAWYER?
OH NO! IT'S DAREDEVIL! STOP HIM, PHIL! STOP HIM!

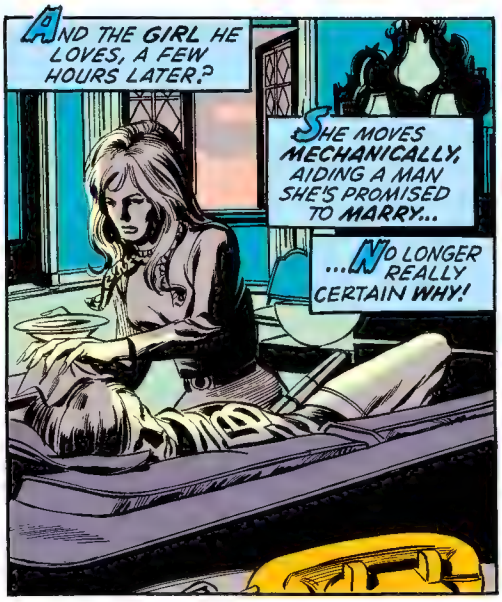
KAREN'S VOICE--SHE'S STILL IN THE ROOM!
BUT--I CAN'T THINK ABOUT THAT NOW. THE OX IS TENSING--WISH I COULD SENSE WHAT HE'S DOING--
--ALL THAT RADIATION--BLOTTING OUT EVERYTHING THIS CLOSE UP--!
YOU--I REMEMBER YOU! YOU'RE THAT COSTUMED BUM--
--THE ONE WHO FOUGHT MR. FEAR!*
*--BACK IN DD #6, WHEN OUR HERO FIRST MET THE RAMPAGING OX.--S.


--AN' I'M GONNA PAY 'EM NOW!
WELL, BUSTER--I'VE GOT DUES TO PAY YOU, TOO--
HE'S MOVING--LIFTING SOMETHING!
BUT WHAT? RADAR SENSES ALL BLURRED! LORD--I'M BLIND!

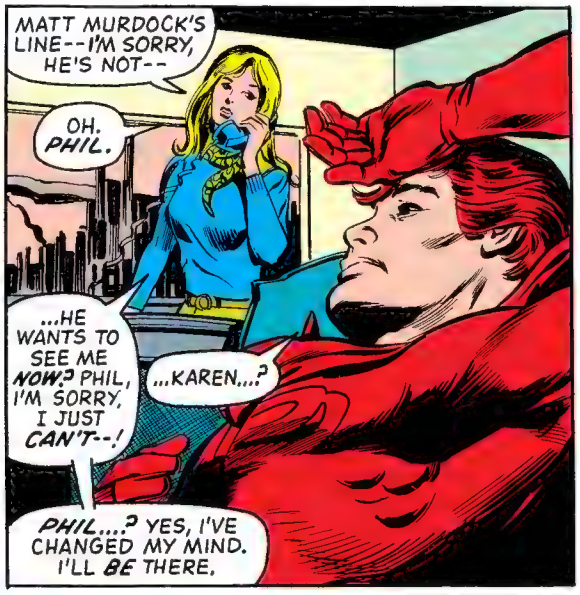

HIS THOUGHTS MOVE QUICKLY, AND HE SUBCONSCIOUSLY CONSIDERS ALL EXTERNAL STIMULI--
WITHOUT CONSCIOUS REALIZATION, HE SUDDENLY KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENING--
--THE BLUR SEEMS TO CLEAR--
--AND WITH LESS THAN AN INSTANT'S GRACE--
--HE MOVES!
DUCKED THAT BOARD JUST IN TIME! ANOTHER MOMENT, AND IT WOULD'VE TAKEN OFF THE TOP OF MY SKULL!
OX, IF THAT'S THE BEST YOU CAN DO--
--MAYBE YOU'D JUST BETTER COME ALONG QUIETLY.?
NO!
YOU CAN'T MAKE FUN OF ME-- CAN'T LAUGH AT ME--
I'M THE OX, MISTER--
SMASH!
--AND THE OX IS STRONGER THAN ANYONE!
WHILE FROM THE WINDOW TO THEIR RIGHT, TWO SILENT FIGURES GRIMLY WATCH--
--AND PERHAPS THEY THINK OF OTHER THINGS--
--OF THINGS WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN!
12

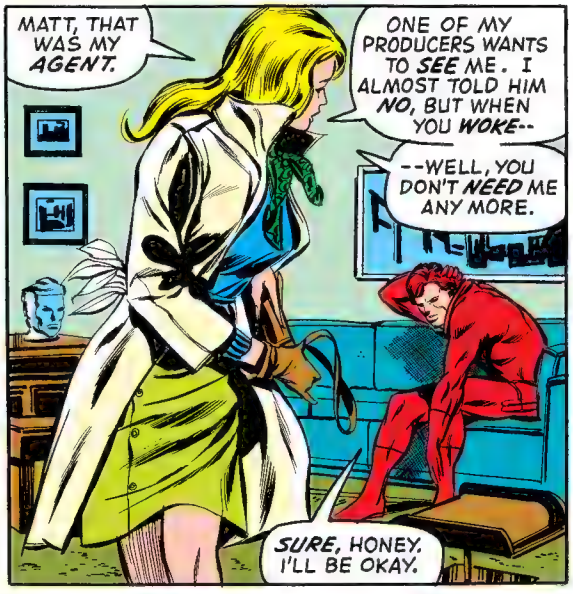

AND A SHORT WAY DOWN THE BLOCK, TWO OTHER FIGURES TURN...
IVAN, PLEASE-- I MUST GO TO HIM. HE NEEDS ME!
CAN'T YOU SEE YET--IT'S OVER? YOU OWE HIM ZERO, SWEETHEART.
HE MIGHT BE KILLED!
--AND SO MIGHT YOU, KID.
YOU'RE STILL HUNG UP ON THE GUY, AREN'T YOU?
IVAN...DEAR, DEAR IVAN.
YOU'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND A WOMAN, WILL YOU?
IT'LL NEVER BE OVER. NEVER.
SOK!
"BUT YOU'RE CORRECT IN ONE THING, OLD FRIEND--I CAN'T HELP HIM NOW--!"
"THIS TIME, HE'LL HAVE TO SURVIVE ON HIS OWN--AND WHEN IT'S THROUGH, IF HE DECIDES HE WANTS ME--
"--IT MUST BE HIS MOVE, AND HIS ALONE!"
DARE-DEVIL!
PHIL, HE'S HURT!
CALL ME A CAB, PHIL.
HE NEEDS SOMEONE TO TAKE CARE OF HIM...
I'M SURE... MATT...WILL UNDERSTAND.
OKAY, KAREN. WHAT-EVER YOU SAY.
13

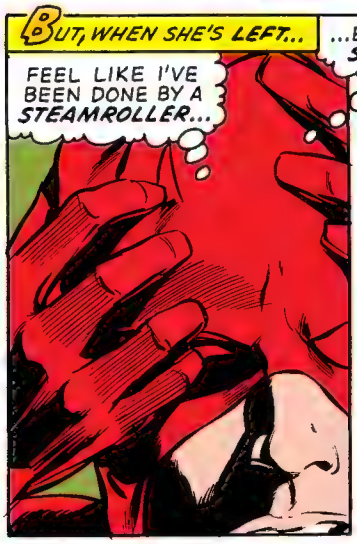
THEN, AS THE CAB DRIVES AWAY, IT LEAVES BEHIND A WEARY PHIL KINGSTON...
...A MAN HURT...YET STILL PAINFULLY, HOPELESSLY, IN LOVE.


AND THE GIRL HE LOVES, A FEW HOURS LATER?
SHE MOVES MECHANICALLY, AIDING A MAN SHE'S PROMISED TO MARRY...
...NO LONGER REALLY CERTAIN WHY!

THE PHONE. SHOULD I ANSWER IT...?
...TELL THEM MATT'S ASLEEP?
PRING!

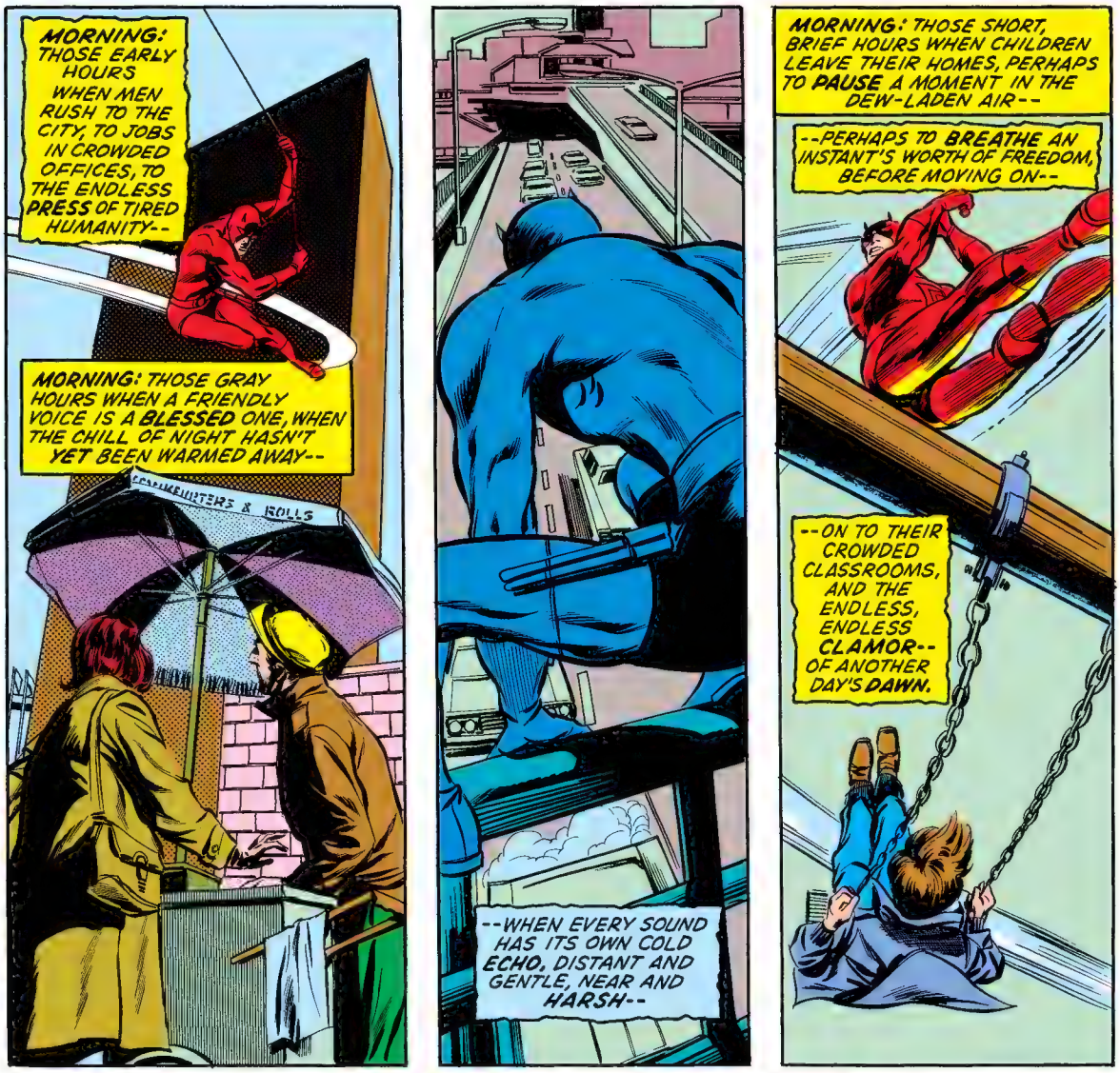

MATT MURDOCK'S LINE--I'M SORRY, HE'S NOT--
OH. PHIL.
...HE WANTS TO SEE ME NOW? PHIL, I'M SORRY, I JUST CAN'T--!
...KAREN...?
PHIL...? YES, I'VE CHANGED MY MIND. I'LL BE THERE.

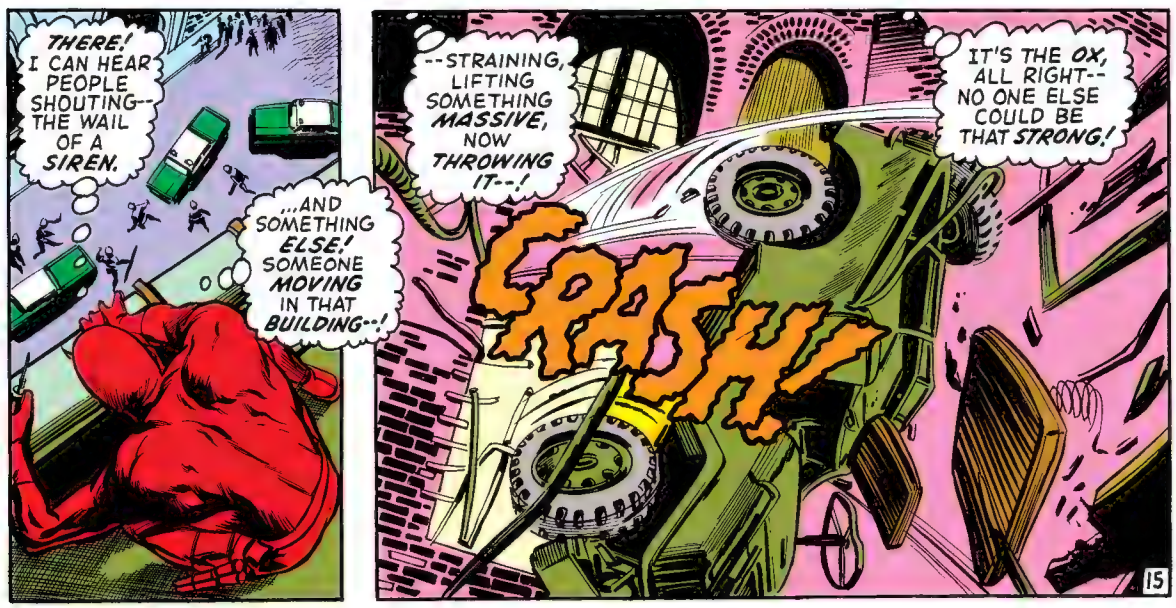

MATT, THAT WAS MY AGENT.
ONE OF MY PRODUCERS WANTS TO SEE ME. I ALMOST TOLD HIM NO, BUT WHEN YOU WOKE--
--WELL, YOU DON'T NEED ME ANY MORE.
SURE, HONEY. I'LL BE OKAY.

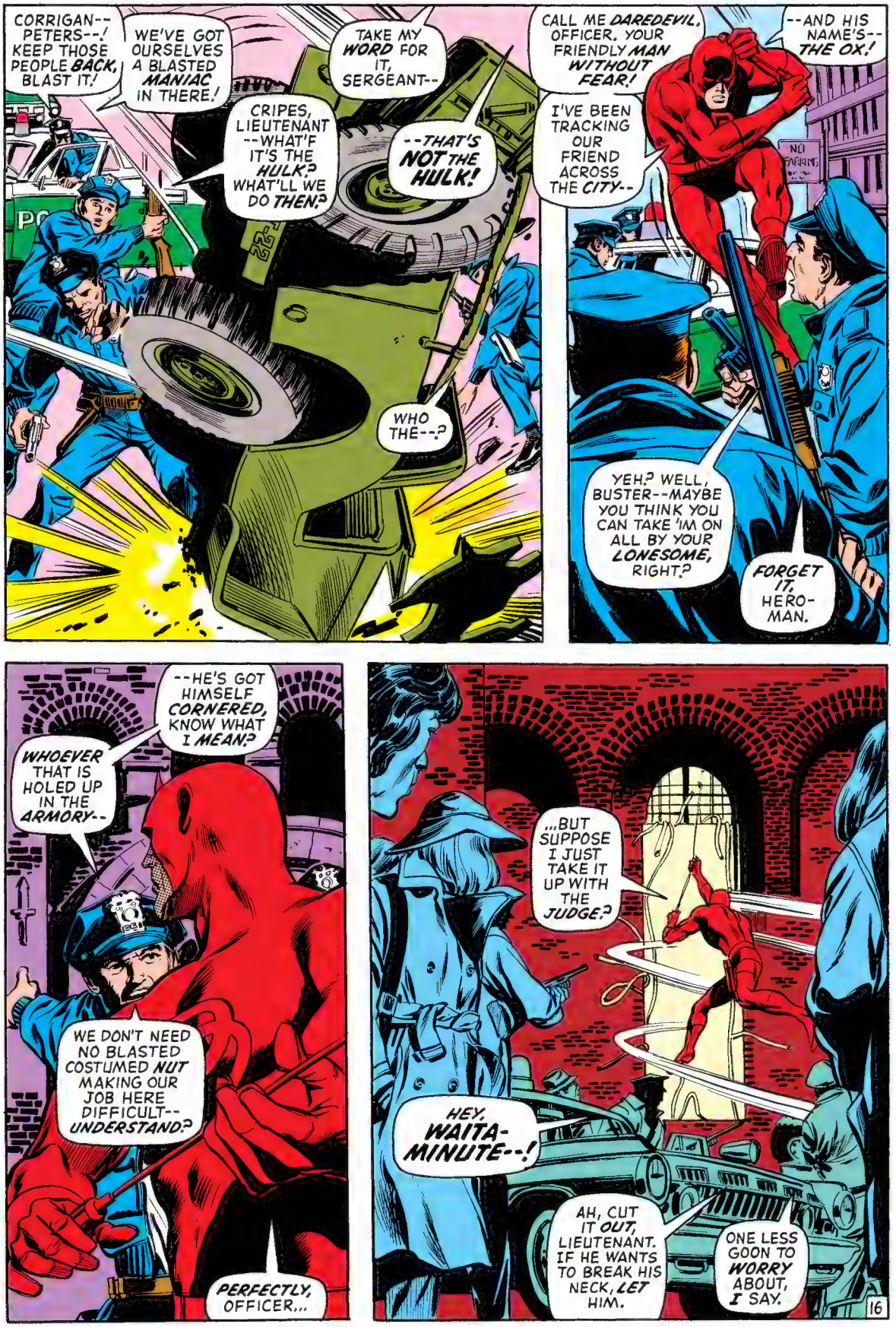

BUT, WHEN SHE'S LEFT...
FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN DONE BY A STEAMROLLER...

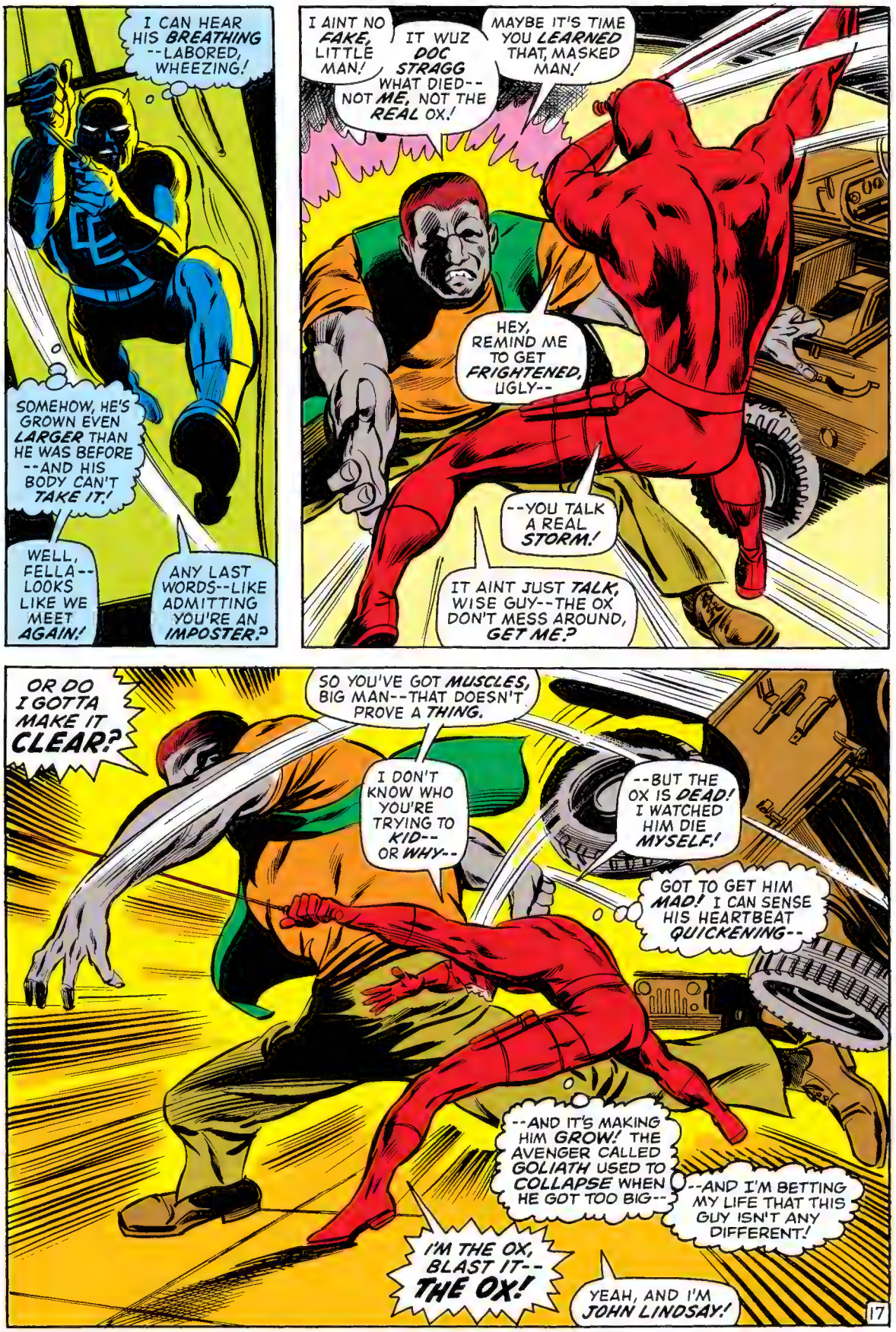
...BUT...I CAN'T STAY HERE...
...THE OX IS ON THE LOOSE, SOMEHOW... SOMEWHERE...

...AND LIKE IT OR NOT, I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN STOP HIM!


MORNING: THOSE EARLY HOURS WHEN MEN RUSH TO THE CITY, TO JOBS IN CROWDED OFFICES, TO THE ENDLESS PRESS OF TIRED HUMANITY--
MORNING: THOSE GRAY HOURS WHEN A FRIENDLY VOICE IS A BLESSED ONE, WHEN THE CHILL OF NIGHT HASN'T YET BEEN WARMED AWAY--
--WHEN EVERY SOUND HAS ITS OWN COLD ECHO, DISTANT AND GENTLE, NEAR AND HARSH--
MORNING: THOSE SHORT, BRIEF HOURS WHEN CHILDREN LEAVE THEIR HOMES, PERHAPS TO PAUSE A MOMENT IN THE DEW-LADEN AIR--
--PERHAPS TO BREATHE AN INSTANT'S WORTH OF FREEDOM, BEFORE MOVING ON--
--ON TO THEIR CROWDED CLASSROOMS, AND THE ENDLESS, ENDLESS CLAMOR-- OF ANOTHER DAY'S DAWN.

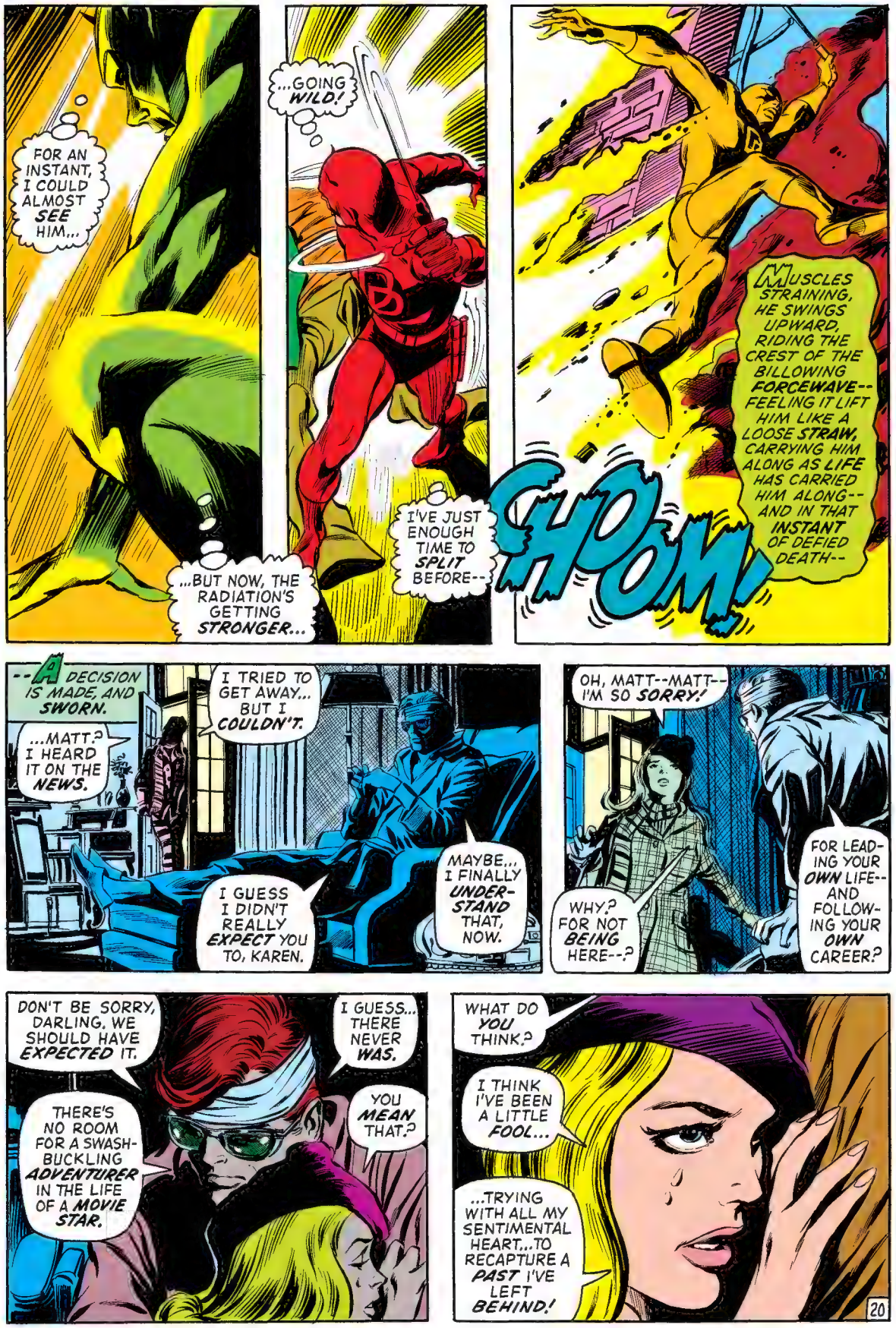

THERE! I CAN HEAR PEOPLE SHOUTING-- THE WAIL OF A SIREN.
...AND SOMETHING ELSE! SOMEONE MOVING IN THAT BUILDING--!
--STRAINING, LIFTING SOMETHING MASSIVE, NOW THROWING IT--!
CRASH!
IT'S THE OX, ALL RIGHT-- NO ONE ELSE COULD BE THAT STRONG!

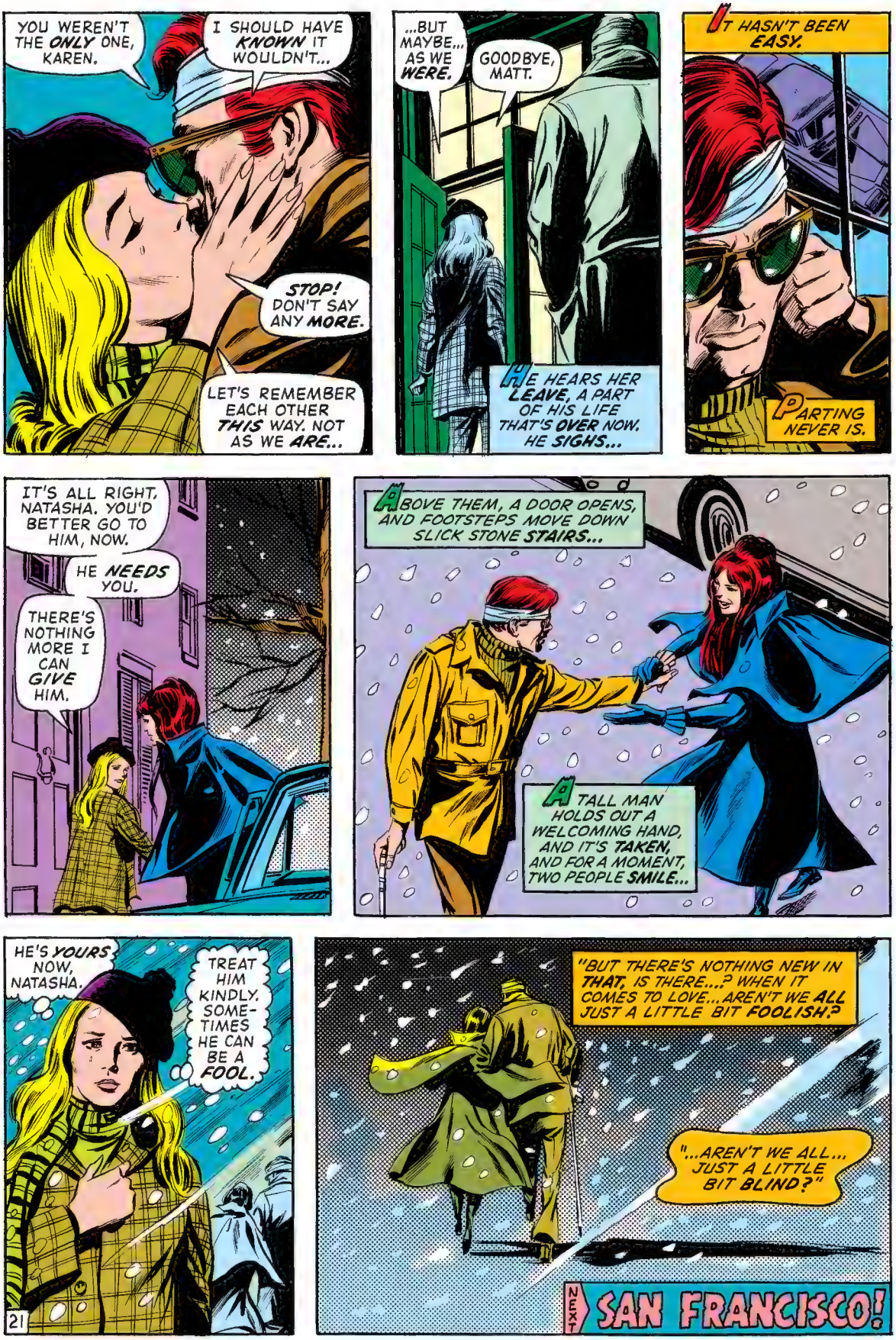

CORRIGAN--PETERS--! KEEP THOSE PEOPLE BACK, BLAST IT!
WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A BLASTED MANIAC IN THERE!
TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, SERGEANT--
CRIPES, LIEUTENANT --WHAT'F IT'S THE HULK? WHAT'LL WE DO THEN?
--THAT'S NOT THE HULK!
WHO THE--?
CALL ME DAREDEVIL, OFFICER. YOUR FRIENDLY MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
--AND HIS NAME'S-- THE OX!
I'VE BEEN TRACKING OUR FRIEND ACROSS THE CITY--
NO PARKING
YEH? WELL, BUSTER--MAYBE YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE 'IM ON ALL BY YOUR LONESOME, RIGHT?
FORGET IT, HERO-MAN.
--HE'S GOT HIMSELF CORNERED, KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
WHOEVER THAT IS HOLED UP IN THE ARMORY--
WE DON'T NEED NO BLASTED COSTUMED NUT MAKING OUR JOB HERE DIFFICULT-- UNDERSTAND?
PERFECTLY, OFFICER...
...BUT SUPPOSE I JUST TAKE IT UP WITH THE JUDGE?
HEY, WAITA-MINUTE--!
AH, CUT IT OUT, LIEUTENANT. IF HE WANTS TO BREAK HIS NECK, LET HIM.
ONE LESS GOON TO WORRY ABOUT, I SAY.
16


I CAN HEAR HIS BREATHING --LABORED, WHEEZING!
SOMEHOW, HE'S GROWN EVEN LARGER THAN HE WAS BEFORE --AND HIS BODY CAN'T TAKE IT!
WELL, FELLA--LOOKS LIKE WE MEET AGAIN!
ANY LAST WORDS--LIKE ADMITTING YOU'RE AN IMPOSTER?
I AINT NO FAKE, LITTLE MAN!
IT WUZ DOC STRAGG WHAT DIED--NOT ME, NOT THE REAL OX!
MAYBE IT'S TIME YOU LEARNED THAT, MASKED MAN!
HEY, REMIND ME TO GET FRIGHTENED, UGLY--
--YOU TALK A REAL STORM!
IT AINT JUST TALK, WISE GUY--THE OX DON'T MESS AROUND, GET ME?
OR DO I GOTTA MAKE IT CLEAR?
SO YOU'VE GOT MUSCLES, BIG MAN--THAT DOESN'T PROVE A THING.
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE TRYING TO KID--OR WHY--
--BUT THE OX IS DEAD! I WATCHED HIM DIE MYSELF!
GOT TO GET HIM MAD! I CAN SENSE HIS HEARTBEAT QUICKENING--
--AND IT'S MAKING HIM GROW! THE AVENGER CALLED GOLIATH USED TO COLLAPSE WHEN HE GOT TOO BIG--
--AND I'M BETTING MY LIFE THAT THIS GUY ISN'T ANY DIFFERENT!
I'M THE OX, BLAST IT--THE OX!
YEAH, AND I'M JOHN LINDSAY!

IT'S WORKING...HE'S WELL OVER FIFTEEN FEET!
NOW IF I CAN JUST KEEP MYSELF FROM GETTING KILLED--MAYBE I'LL LEARN WHAT THIS NONSENSE IS ALL ABOUT!
STRAGG? SEEMS I'VE HEARD THE NAME BEFORE--!
WASN'T HE A CYBERNETICIST--CONVICTED OF KILLING HIS WIFE?
YEAH, BUT THAT WUZ YEARS AGO--BEFORE HE MET ME, AND TRICKED ME UNDER THAT CRAZY HELMET OF HIS!
--THEY OFFERED ME A PAROLE--IF I'D WORK ON SOME SORTA FLAKEY EXPERIMENT!
WHEN I--WHEN I WENT BACK TO PRISON AS STRAGG--EVERYBODY THOUGHT I WUZ HIM!
I TRIED, I REALLY TRIED--BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!
NOW I GET IT!
THEN--MAYBE YOU ARE WHO YOU CLAIM TO BE AFTER ALL!
SOMEHOW, THE OX'S SUBMERGED IDENTITY WAS RELEASED BY YOUR EXPOSURE TO RADIATION--!
BETTER BELIEVE IT, HERO-MAN--
-UNNNH!-
GETTIN' HARD TO MOVE--CAN'T LIFT MY ARMS FAST ENOUGH!
BUT--I'M STILL STRONG--
--I'M STILL ME!
-AHHH- NO ARGUMENTS THERE, CURLY!
SAK!
YEAH, YOU'RE LAUGHIN' AT ME--JUST LIKE YOU SMART GUYS ALWAYS DO!
STRAGG LAUGHED AT ME, TOO--TRICKED ME REAL GOOD!
BUT HE PAID FOR IT--HE GOT TOO SMART FOR HIS-SELF--
--JUST LIKE--JUST LIKE YOU, HORNHEAD--JUST--JUST--

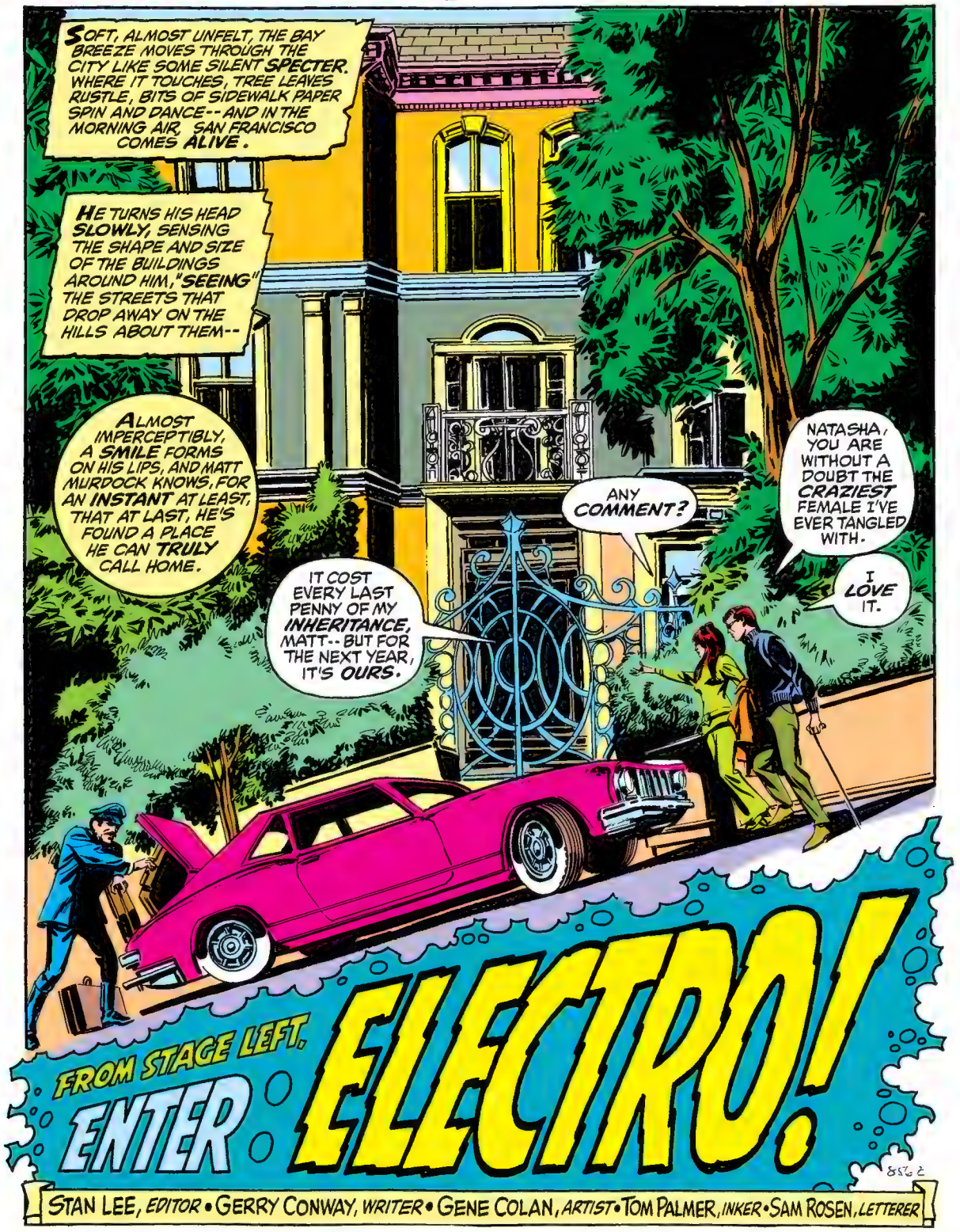
--JUST-- LIKE-- YOU--!
MY HEAD--!
CRIPES-- WHAT'M I DOING? THE WHOLE THING-- BUILDING UP INSIDE ME LIKE AN ATOMIC PILE--!
I'VE BEEN A FOOL-- A BLIND FOOL!
THE STRAGG PERSONALITY-- IT'S TAKING OVER!
I'VE GOT TO MOVE FAST--!
HAVE TO CALM DOWN-- GET MY-SELF UNDER CONTROL!
WHAM!
SORRY, PAL--BUT YOU'RE ALREADY TOO DANGEROUS AS IT IS--
I'VE GOT TO STOP YOU-- NOW!
WAS IT ENOUGH? ACCORDING TO MY RADAR SENSE-- THE RADIATION'S GETTING STRONGER!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?
THE RIGHT THING, DAREDEVIL. YOU DID-- THE RIGHT THING!
FUNNY--I CAN FEEL MYSELF COMIN' APART--
BUT SOMEHOW--IT DOESN'T MATTER ANY MORE MAYBE NOW--I'LL FIND THAT PEACE--
--THE PEACE I THOUGHT I'D GET--
--AND WOULD'VE HAD, IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THAT RADIATION BATH!
THANKS, MASKED MAN.
YOU MIGHT FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE...
...BUT THANKS!
STRAGG....!
19


FOR AN INSTANT, I COULD ALMOST SEE HIM...
...GOING WILD!
...BUT NOW, THE RADIATION'S GETTING STRONGER...
I'VE JUST ENOUGH TIME TO SPLIT BEFORE--
MUSCLES STRAINING, HE SWINGS UPWARD, RIDING THE CREST OF THE BILLOWING FORCEWAVE--FEELING IT LIFT HIM LIKE A LOOSE STRAW, CARRYING HIM ALONG AS LIFE HAS CARRIED HIM ALONG--AND IN THAT INSTANT OF DEFIED DEATH--
KHOOM!
--A DECISION IS MADE, AND SWORN.
...MATT.? I HEARD IT ON THE NEWS.
I TRIED TO GET AWAY... BUT I COULDN'T.
I GUESS I DIDN'T REALLY EXPECT YOU TO, KAREN.
MAYBE... I FINALLY UNDER-STAND THAT, NOW.
OH, MATT--MATT--I'M SO SORRY!
WHY.? FOR NOT BEING HERE--?
FOR LEAD-ING YOUR OWN LIFE--AND FOLLOW-ING YOUR OWN CAREER?
DON'T BE SORRY, DARLING. WE SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED IT.
THERE'S NO ROOM FOR A SWASH-BUCKLING ADVENTURER IN THE LIFE OF A MOVIE STAR.
I GUESS... THERE NEVER WAS.
YOU MEAN THAT.?
WHAT DO YOU THINK.?
I THINK I'VE BEEN A LITTLE FOOL...
...TRYING WITH ALL MY SENTIMENTAL HEART...TO RECAPTURE A PAST I'VE LEFT BEHIND!


YOU WEREN'T THE ONLY ONE, KAREN.
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT WOULDN'T...
STOP! DON'T SAY ANY MORE.
LET'S REMEMBER EACH OTHER THIS WAY. NOT AS WE ARE...
...BUT MAYBE... AS WE WERE.
GOODBYE, MATT.
HE HEARS HER LEAVE, A PART OF HIS LIFE THAT'S OVER NOW. HE SIGHS...
IT HASN'T BEEN EASY.
PARTING NEVER IS.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, NATASHA. YOU'D BETTER GO TO HIM, NOW.
HE NEEDS YOU.
THERE'S NOTHING MORE I CAN GIVE HIM.
ABOVE THEM, A DOOR OPENS, AND FOOTSTEPS MOVE DOWN SLICK STONE STAIRS...
A TALL MAN HOLDS OUT A WELCOMING HAND, AND IT'S TAKEN, AND FOR A MOMENT, TWO PEOPLE SMILE...
HE'S YOURS NOW, NATASHA.
TREAT HIM KINDLY. SOMETIMES HE CAN BE A FOOL.
"BUT THERE'S NOTHING NEW IN THAT, IS THERE...? WHEN IT COMES TO LOVE... AREN'T WE ALL JUST A LITTLE BIT FOOLISH?
"...AREN'T WE ALL... JUST A LITTLE BIT BLIND?"
NEXT SAN FRANCISCO!
21

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
20¢ CC
87
MAY
02459
DAREDEVIL™
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
GET BACK, YOU FOOLS! IF YOU SO MUCH AS TOUCH ELECTRO---
..YOU DIE!
AND JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK IS GONNA HAPPEN TO YOU, DD--WHEN YOUR BILLY-CLUB HITS ME??
FROM STAGE LEFT:
ENTER ELECTRO!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™


SOFT, ALMOST UNFELT, THE BAY BREEZE MOVES THROUGH THE CITY LIKE SOME SILENT SPECTER. WHERE IT TOUCHES, TREE LEAVES RUSTLE, BITS OF SIDEWALK PAPER SPIN AND DANCE--AND IN THE MORNING AIR, SAN FRANCISCO COMES ALIVE.
HE TURNS HIS HEAD SLOWLY, SENSING THE SHAPE AND SIZE OF THE BUILDINGS AROUND HIM, "SEEING" THE STREETS THAT DROP AWAY ON THE HILLS ABOUT THEM--
ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLY, A SMILE FORMS ON HIS LIPS, AND MATT MURDOCK KNOWS, FOR AN INSTANT AT LEAST, THAT AT LAST, HE'S FOUND A PLACE HE CAN TRULY CALL HOME.
IT COST EVERY LAST PENNY OF MY INHERITANCE, MATT--BUT FOR THE NEXT YEAR, IT'S OURS.
ANY COMMENT?
NATASHA, YOU ARE WITHOUT A DOUBT THE CRAZIEST FEMALE I'VE EVER TANGLED WITH.
I LOVE IT.

FROM STAGE LEFT, ENTER: ELECTRO!

STAN LEE, *EDITOR* • GERRY CONWAY, *WRITER* • GENE COLAN, *ARTIST* • TOM PALMER, *INKER* • SAM ROSEN, *LETTERER*

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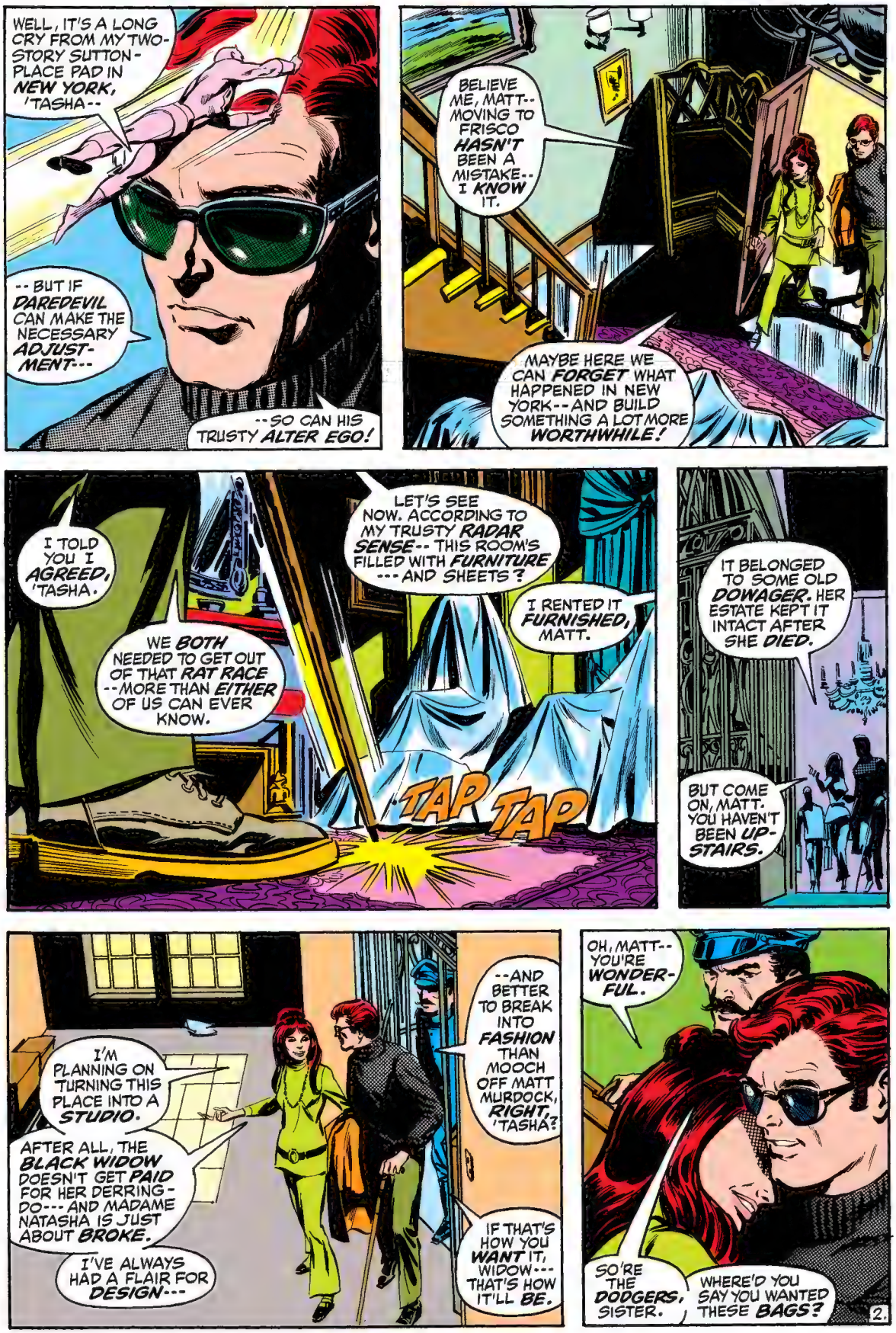
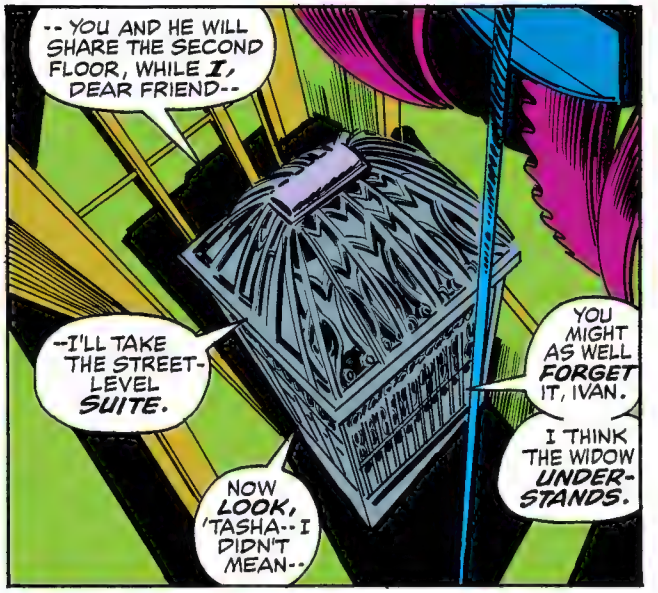
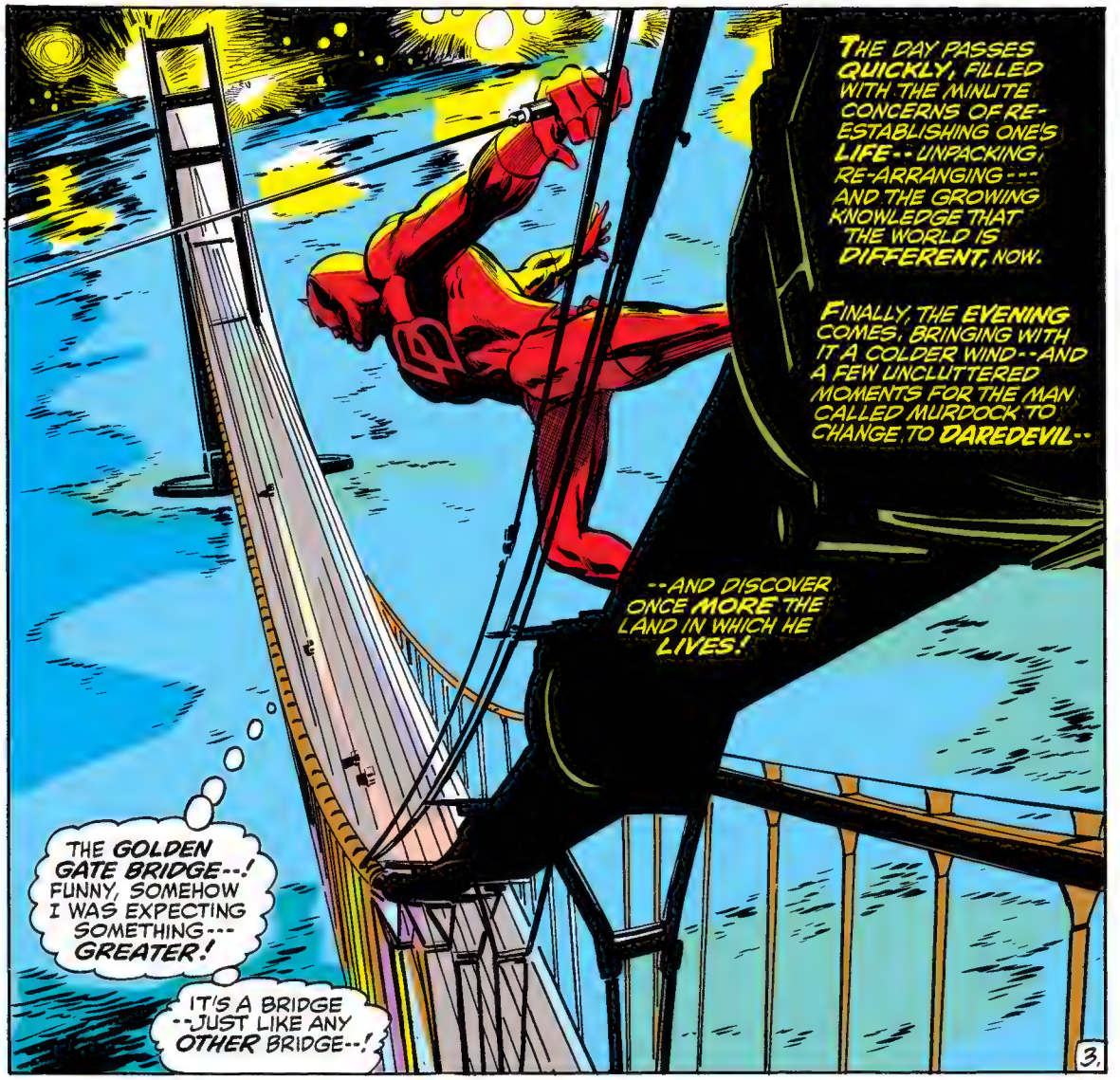
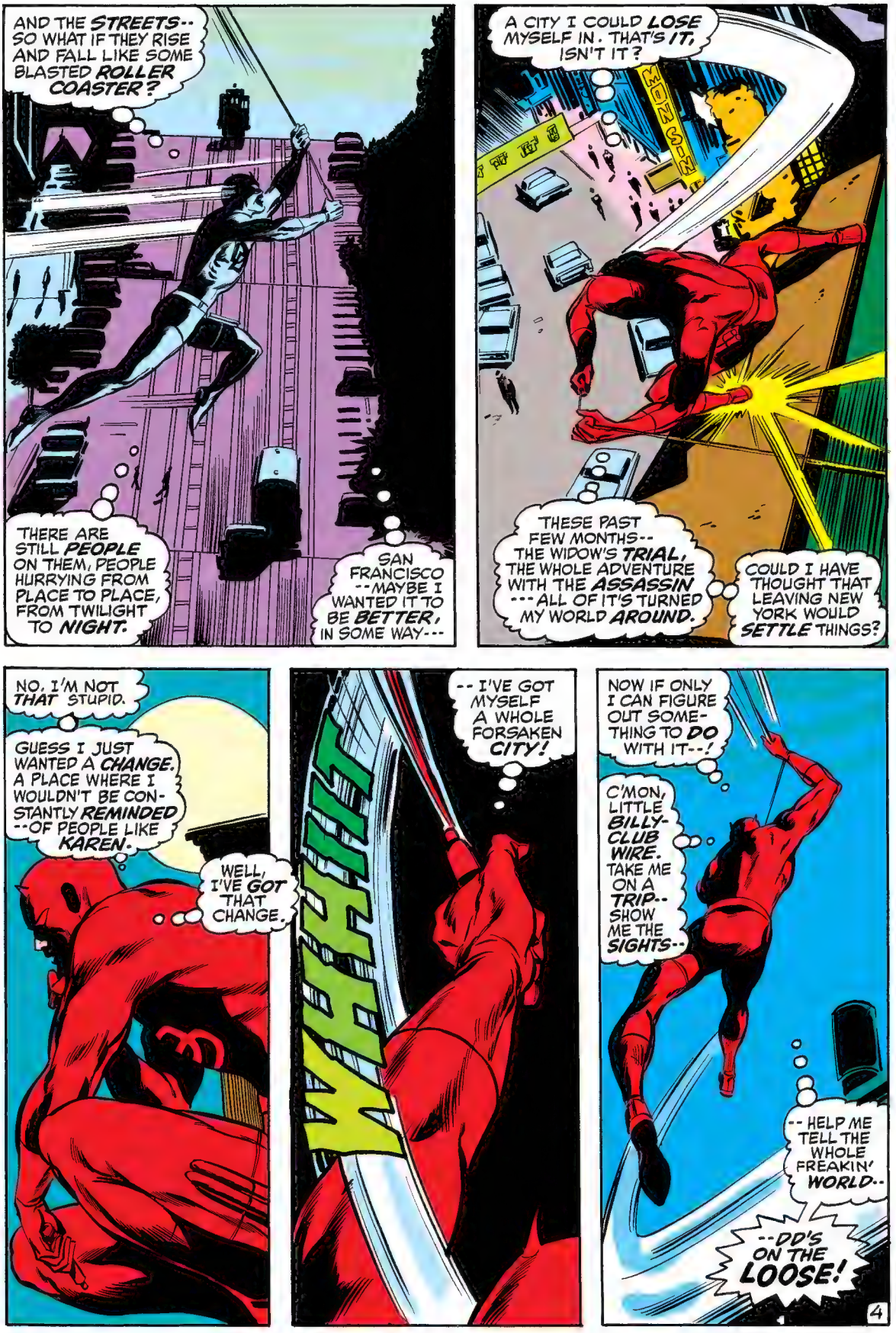
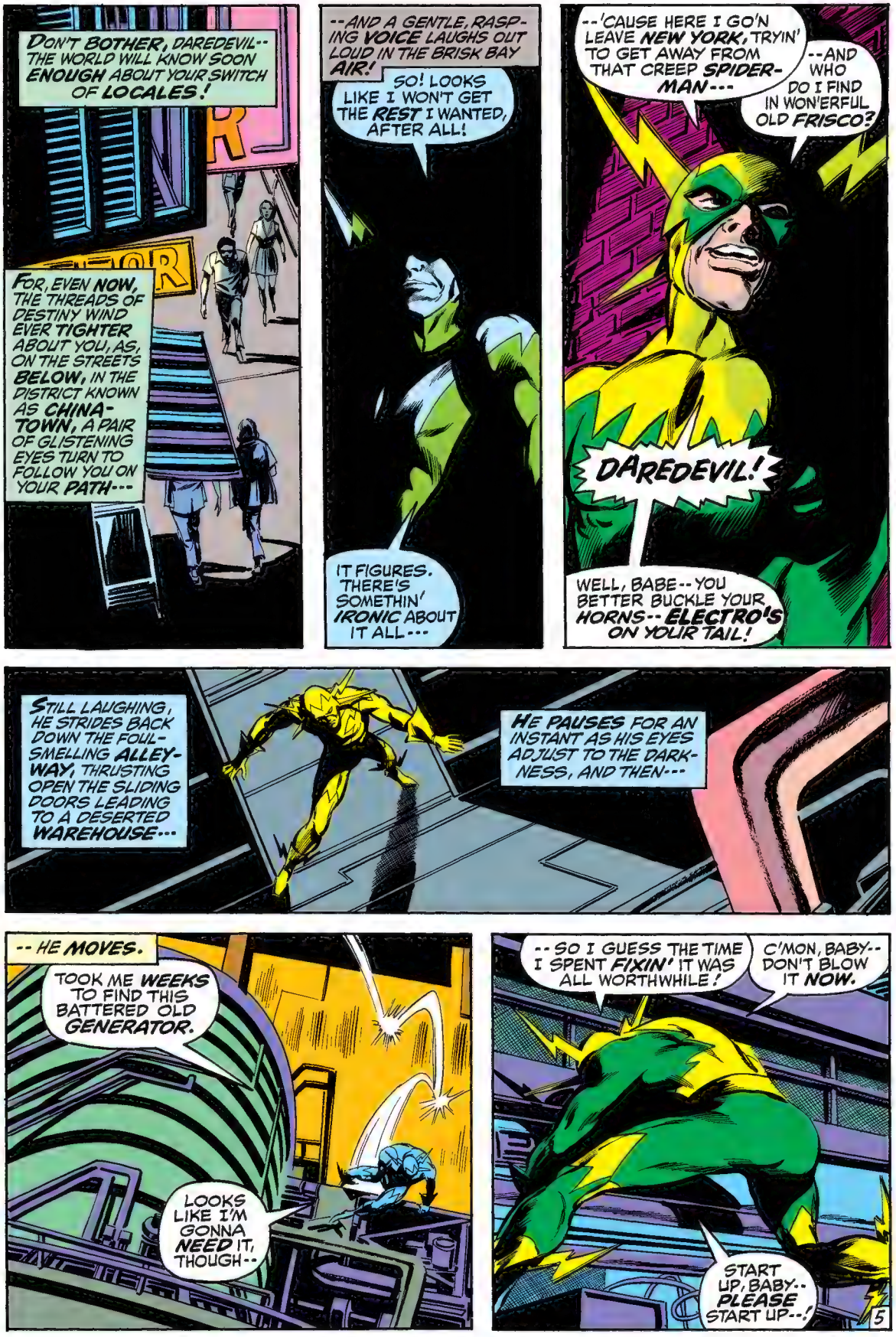

WELL, IT'S A LONG CRY FROM MY TWO-STORY SUTTON-PLACE PAD IN NEW YORK, 'TASHA--
-- BUT IF DAREDEVIL CAN MAKE THE NECESSARY ADJUST-MENT---
--SO CAN HIS TRUSTY ALTER EGO!
BELIEVE ME, MATT-- MOVING TO FRISCO HASN'T BEEN A MISTAKE-- I KNOW IT.
MAYBE HERE WE CAN FORGET WHAT HAPPENED IN NEW YORK--AND BUILD SOMETHING A LOT MORE WORTHWHILE!
I TOLD YOU I AGREED, 'TASHA.
WE BOTH NEEDED TO GET OUT OF THAT RAT RACE --MORE THAN EITHER OF US CAN EVER KNOW.
LET'S SEE NOW. ACCORDING TO MY TRUSTY RADAR SENSE-- THIS ROOM'S FILLED WITH FURNITURE --- AND SHEETS?
I RENTED IT FURNISHED, MATT.
TAP TAP
IT BELONGED TO SOME OLD DOWAGER. HER ESTATE KEPT IT INTACT AFTER SHE DIED.
BUT COME ON, MATT. YOU HAVEN'T BEEN UP-STAIRS.
I'M PLANNING ON TURNING THIS PLACE INTO A STUDIO.
AFTER ALL, THE BLACK WIDOW DOESN'T GET PAID FOR HER DERRING-DO--- AND MADAME NATASHA IS JUST ABOUT BROKE.
I'VE ALWAYS HAD A FLAIR FOR DESIGN---
--AND BETTER TO BREAK INTO FASHION THAN MOOCH OFF MATT MURDOCK, RIGHT, 'TASHA?
IF THAT'S HOW YOU WANT IT, WIDOW--- THAT'S HOW IT'LL BE.
OH, MATT-- YOU'RE WONDER-FUL.
SO'RE THE DODGERS, SISTER.
WHERE'D YOU SAY YOU WANTED THESE BAGS?
2.

IVAN, MY DARLING CHAUFFEUR-- YOU'RE A DIRTY OLD MAN.
MATT AND I ARE JUST FRIENDS. FOR NOW, ANY-WAY.
AND SO YOU DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA---

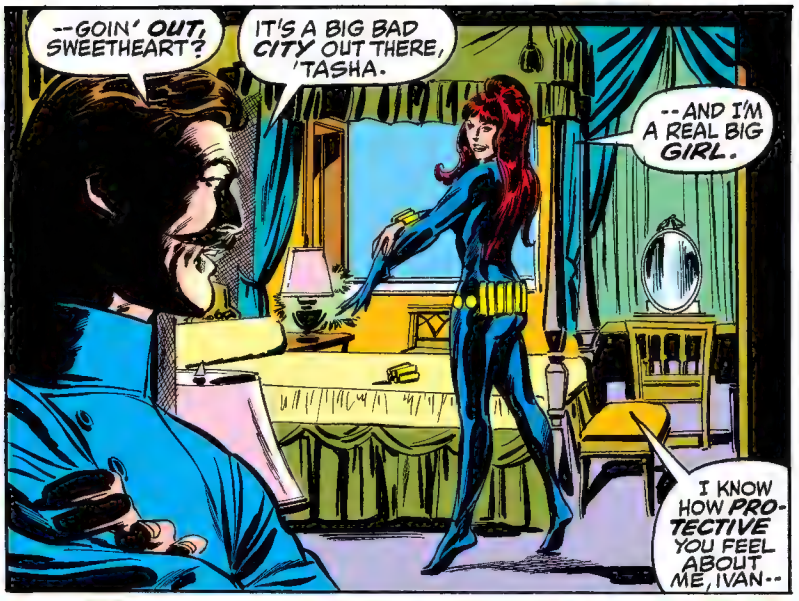

-- YOU AND HE WILL SHARE THE SECOND FLOOR, WHILE I, DEAR FRIEND--
--I'LL TAKE THE STREET-LEVEL SUITE.
NOW LOOK, 'TASHA-- I DIDN'T MEAN--
YOU MIGHT AS WELL FORGET IT, IVAN.
I THINK THE WIDOW UNDER-STANDS.


THE DAY PASSES QUICKLY, FILLED WITH THE MINUTE CONCERNS OF RE-ESTABLISHING ONE'S LIFE-- UNPACKING, RE-ARRANGING--- AND THE GROWING KNOWLEDGE THAT THE WORLD IS DIFFERENT, NOW.
FINALLY, THE EVENING COMES, BRINGING WITH IT A COLDER WIND--AND A FEW UNCLUTTERED MOMENTS FOR THE MAN CALLED MURDOCK TO CHANGE TO DAREDEVIL--
--AND DISCOVER ONCE MORE THE LAND IN WHICH HE LIVES!
THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE--! FUNNY, SOMEHOW I WAS EXPECTING SOMETHING--- GREATER!
IT'S A BRIDGE --JUST LIKE ANY OTHER BRIDGE--!
3.

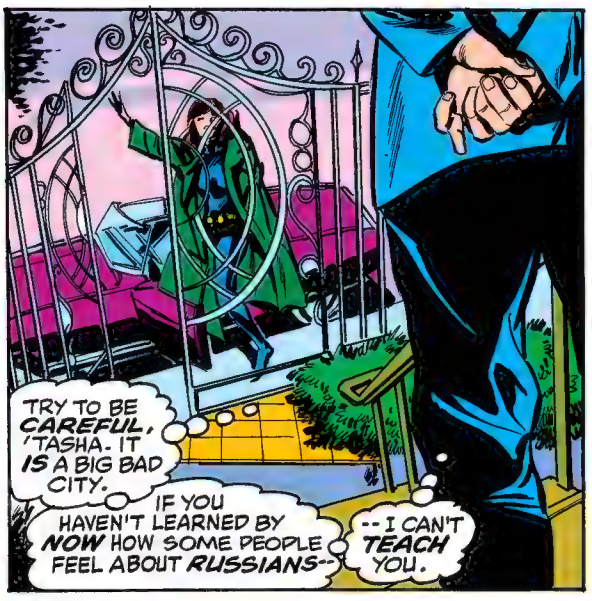

AND THE STREETS-- SO WHAT IF THEY RISE AND FALL LIKE SOME BLASTED ROLLER COASTER?
THERE ARE STILL PEOPLE ON THEM, PEOPLE HURRYING FROM PLACE TO PLACE, FROM TWILIGHT TO NIGHT.
SAN FRANCISCO --MAYBE I WANTED IT TO BE BETTER, IN SOME WAY---
A CITY I COULD LOSE MYSELF IN. THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT?
MANSION
THESE PAST FEW MONTHS-- THE WIDOW'S TRIAL, THE WHOLE ADVENTURE WITH THE ASSASSIN --- ALL OF IT'S TURNED MY WORLD AROUND.
COULD I HAVE THOUGHT THAT LEAVING NEW YORK WOULD SETTLE THINGS?
NO, I'M NOT THAT STUPID.
GUESS I JUST WANTED A CHANGE. A PLACE WHERE I WOULDN'T BE CONSTANTLY REMINDED --OF PEOPLE LIKE KAREN.
WELL, I'VE GOT THAT CHANGE.
WHHIIT
-- I'VE GOT MYSELF A WHOLE FORSAKEN CITY!
NOW IF ONLY I CAN FIGURE OUT SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT--!
C'MON, LITTLE BILLY-CLUB WIRE. TAKE ME ON A TRIP-- SHOW ME THE SIGHTS--
-- HELP ME TELL THE WHOLE FREAKIN' WORLD--
--DD'S ON THE LOOSE!
4

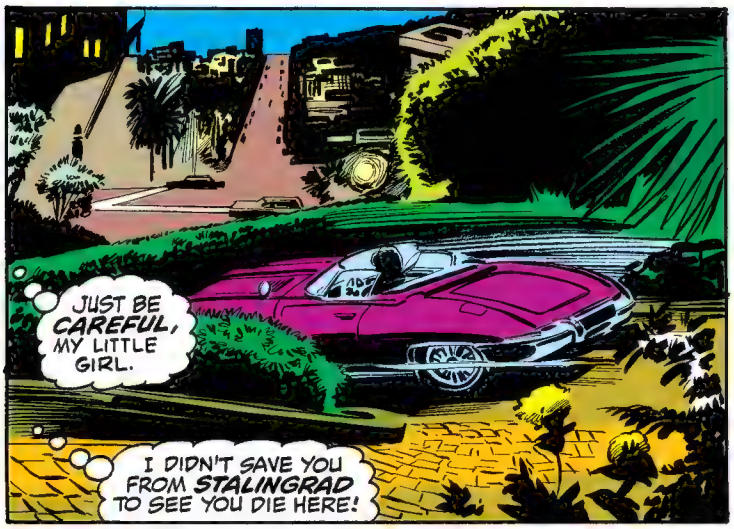

DON'T BOTHER, DAREDEVIL-- THE WORLD WILL KNOW SOON ENOUGH ABOUT YOUR SWITCH OF LOCALES!
FOR, EVEN NOW, THE THREADS OF DESTINY WIND EVER TIGHTER ABOUT YOU, AS, ON THE STREETS BELOW, IN THE DISTRICT KNOWN AS CHINA-TOWN, A PAIR OF GLISTENING EYES TURN TO FOLLOW YOU ON YOUR PATH---
--AND A GENTLE, RASPING VOICE LAUGHS OUT LOUD IN THE BRISK BAY AIR!
SO! LOOKS LIKE I WON'T GET THE REST I WANTED, AFTER ALL!
IT FIGURES. THERE'S SOMETHIN' IRONIC ABOUT IT ALL---
--'CAUSE HERE I GO'N LEAVE NEW YORK, TRYIN' TO GET AWAY FROM THAT CREEP SPIDER-MAN---
--AND WHO DO I FIND IN WON'ERFUL OLD FRISCO?
DAREDEVIL!
WELL, BABE--YOU BETTER BUCKLE YOUR HORNS--ELECTRO'S ON YOUR TAIL!
STILL LAUGHING, HE STRIDES BACK DOWN THE FOUL-SMELLING ALLEY-WAY, THRUSTING OPEN THE SLIDING DOORS LEADING TO A DESERTED WAREHOUSE...
HE PAUSES FOR AN INSTANT AS HIS EYES ADJUST TO THE DARKNESS, AND THEN---
-- HE MOVES.
TOOK ME WEEKS TO FIND THIS BATTERED OLD GENERATOR.
LOOKS LIKE I'M GONNA NEED IT, THOUGH--
-- SO I GUESS THE TIME I SPENT FIXIN' IT WAS ALL WORTHWHILE!
C'MON, BABY-- DON'T BLOW IT NOW.
START UP, BABY-- PLEASE START UP--!
5

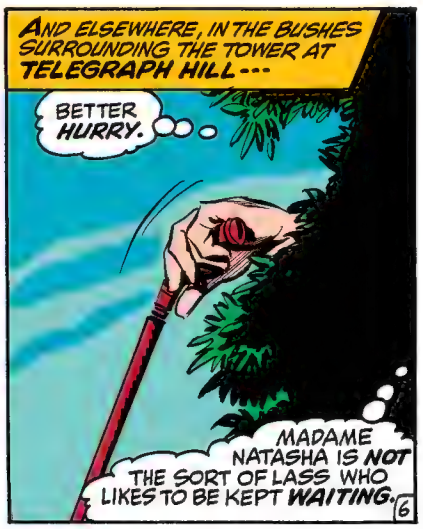
THE COILS SEEM TO SPIN, GATHER SPEED--
HAHAHAAHAHA
--THE ROOM FILLS WITH THE STENCH OF BURNING OIL--
--AND IN A SUDDEN FLASH OF LIGHTNING-- ELECTRO SCREAMS!

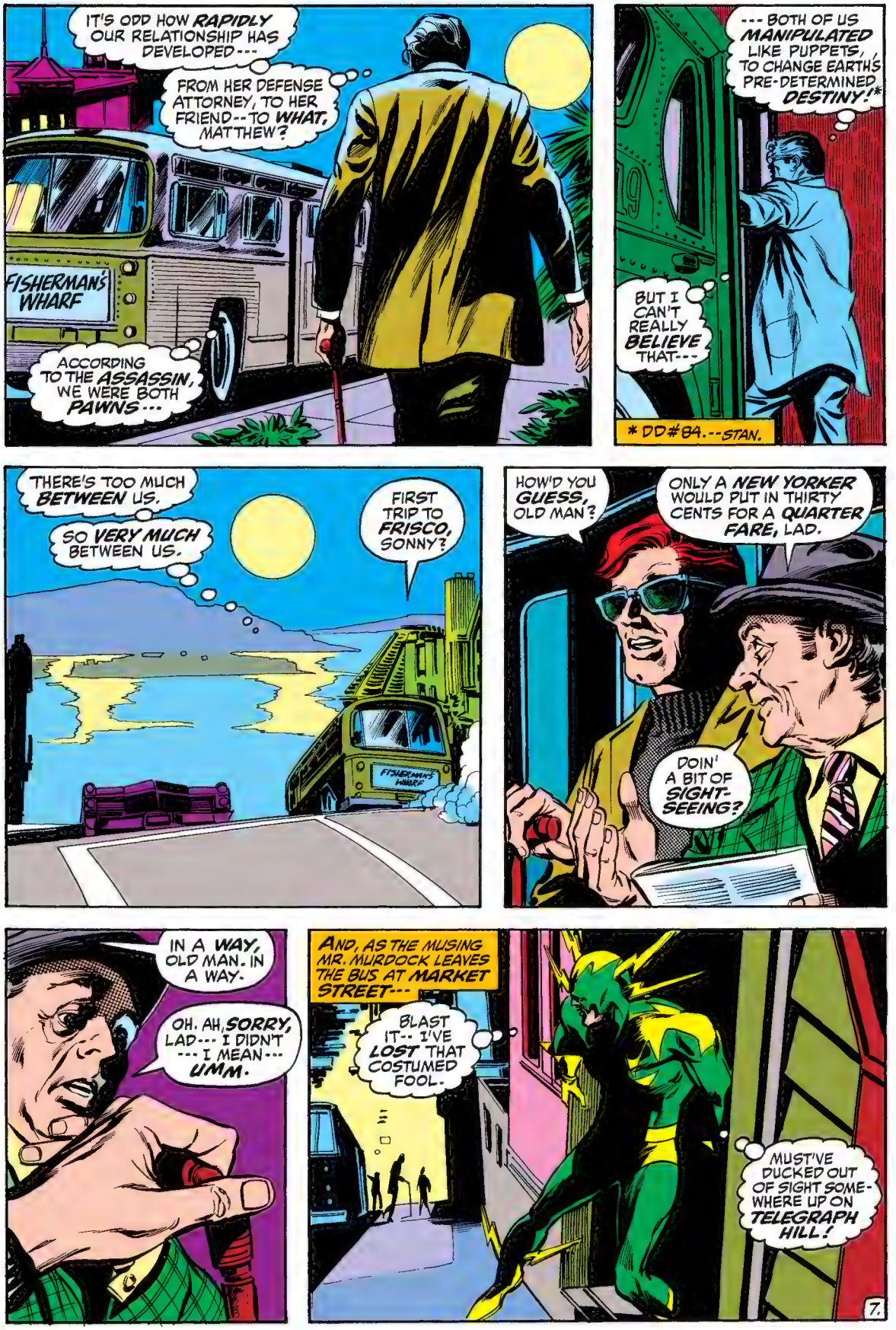

--GOIN' OUT, SWEETHEART?
IT'S A BIG BAD CITY OUT THERE, 'TASHA.
--AND I'M A REAL BIG GIRL.
I KNOW HOW PROTECTIVE YOU FEEL ABOUT ME, IVAN--

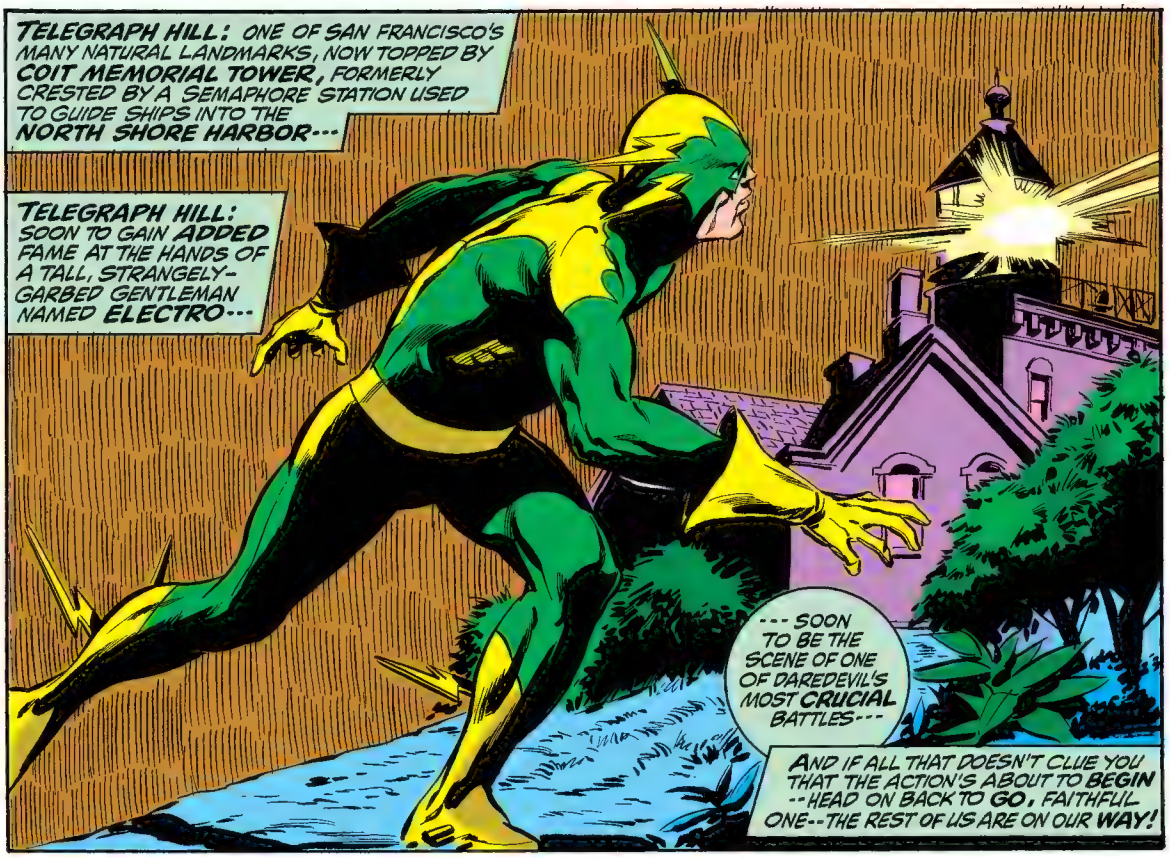
--AND I KNOW YOU DON'T REALLY APPROVE OF MATT--
BUT THAT CAN'T CHANGE MY FEELINGS FOR HIM.
--OR CHANGE THE FACT I'M MEETING HIM FOR DINNER!
BE GOOD, HANDSOME.


TRY TO BE CAREFUL, 'TASHA. IT IS A BIG BAD CITY.
IF YOU HAVEN'T LEARNED BY NOW HOW SOME PEOPLE FEEL ABOUT RUSSIANS--
--I CAN'T TEACH YOU.


JUST BE CAREFUL, MY LITTLE GIRL.
I DIDN'T SAVE YOU FROM STALINGRAD TO SEE YOU DIE HERE!


AND ELSEWHERE, IN THE BUSHES SURROUNDING THE TOWER AT TELEGRAPH HILL---
BETTER HURRY.
MADAME NATASHA IS NOT THE SORT OF LASS WHO LIKES TO BE KEPT WAITING.


IT'S ODD HOW RAPIDLY OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS DEVELOPED---
FROM HER DEFENSE ATTORNEY, TO HER FRIEND--TO WHAT, MATTHEW?
FISHERMAN'S WHARF
ACCORDING TO THE ASSASSIN, WE WERE BOTH PAWNS---
--- BOTH OF US MANIPULATED LIKE PUPPETS, TO CHANGE EARTH'S PRE-DETERMINED DESTINY!*
BUT I CAN'T REALLY BELIEVE THAT---
* DD#84.--STAN.
THERE'S TOO MUCH BETWEEN US.
SO VERY MUCH BETWEEN US.
FIRST TRIP TO FRISCO, SONNY?
HOW'D YOU GUESS, OLD MAN?
ONLY A NEW YORKER WOULD PUT IN THIRTY CENTS FOR A QUARTER FARE, LAD.
DOIN' A BIT OF SIGHT-SEEING?
IN A WAY, OLD MAN. IN A WAY.
OH, AH, SORRY, LAD--- I DIDN'T --- I MEAN--- UMM.
AND, AS THE MUSING MR. MURDOCK LEAVES THE BUS AT MARKET STREET---
BLAST IT-- I'VE LOST THAT COSTUMED FOOL.
MUST'VE DUCKED OUT OF SIGHT SOMEWHERE UP ON TELEGRAPH HILL!


TELEGRAPH HILL: ONE OF SAN FRANCISCO'S MANY NATURAL LANDMARKS, NOW TOPPED BY COIT MEMORIAL TOWER, FORMERLY CRESTED BY A SEMAPHORE STATION USED TO GUIDE SHIPS INTO THE NORTH SHORE HARBOR---
TELEGRAPH HILL: SOON TO GAIN ADDED FAME AT THE HANDS OF A TALL, STRANGELY-GARBED GENTLEMAN NAMED ELECTRO---
--- SOON TO BE THE SCENE OF ONE OF DAREDEVIL'S MOST CRUCIAL BATTLES---
AND IF ALL THAT DOESN'T CLUE YOU THAT THE ACTION'S ABOUT TO BEGIN --HEAD ON BACK TO GO, FAITHFUL ONE--THE REST OF US ARE ON OUR WAY!

QUICK WORK TO DISPATCH THAT HALF-BAKED GUARD.
FRISCO HAS YET TO BE EDU-CATED IN MATTERS OF SUPER-VILLAINY ---

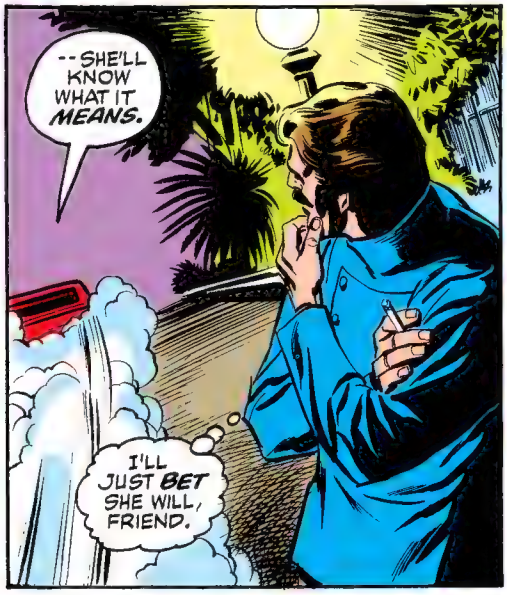
---AN EDUCATION I HOPE TO PROVIDE, AS WELL AS A FEAR-BEARING EXAMPLE!
A SHORT BURST OF ELECTRO-MAGNETIC ENERGY, AND THE BOLTED DOOR SWINGS WIDE--

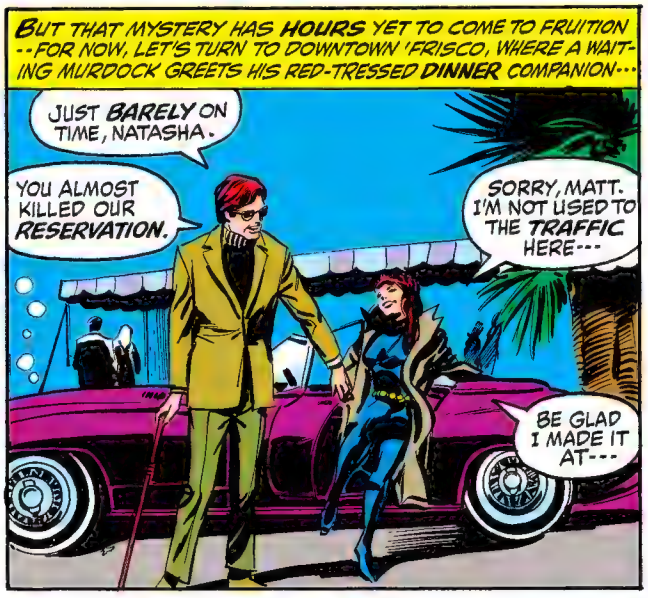
--JUST AS ALL SAN FRANCISCO WILL SOON OPEN BEFORE THE HAND --OF ELECTRO!
YES, A TWOFOLD PURPOSE WILL BE SERVED TONIGHT---

--REVENGE AGAINST THE HATED CRIME-FIGHTER FOR HIS IGNOMINIOUS TRIUMPH AGAINST ME ONCE BEFORE--*
--AND MORE--
*DD#2.--MEMORY-LANE STAN.
--THE TOTAL ANNIHILATION OF SAN FRANCISCO'S WILL TO RESIST!
AND YOU, SIR, WILL BE THE FIRST TO EXPERIENCE THE FULL MEANING OF THAT LESSON--!
HOLY COW! SOME SORTA CRAZY--!
HARDLY, MY FRIEND.
NOT INSANE--AS ALL OF YOU WILL SOON DISCOVER!
WHILE, ON A PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL STREET OVERLOOKING THE NORTH SHORE--
NICE NIGHT. MAYBE THE KIDS KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOIN' AFTER ALL.
MAYBE I'M JUST A BATTERED OLD FOGEY--EH?
HEY, MAN--THIS THE PLACE WHERE A CHICK CALLED NATASHA LIVES?
WHO'S ASKING, HANDSOME?

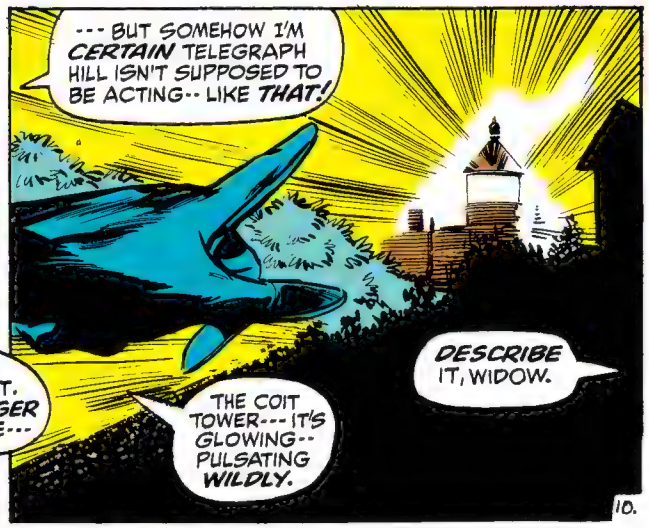
THE NAME'S FRENCH, MISTER. I HEARD 'TASHA WAS IN TOWN, MADE A FEW DELICATE INQUIRIES---
I GATHER YOU'RE HER CHAUFFEUR. IVAN, RIGHT?

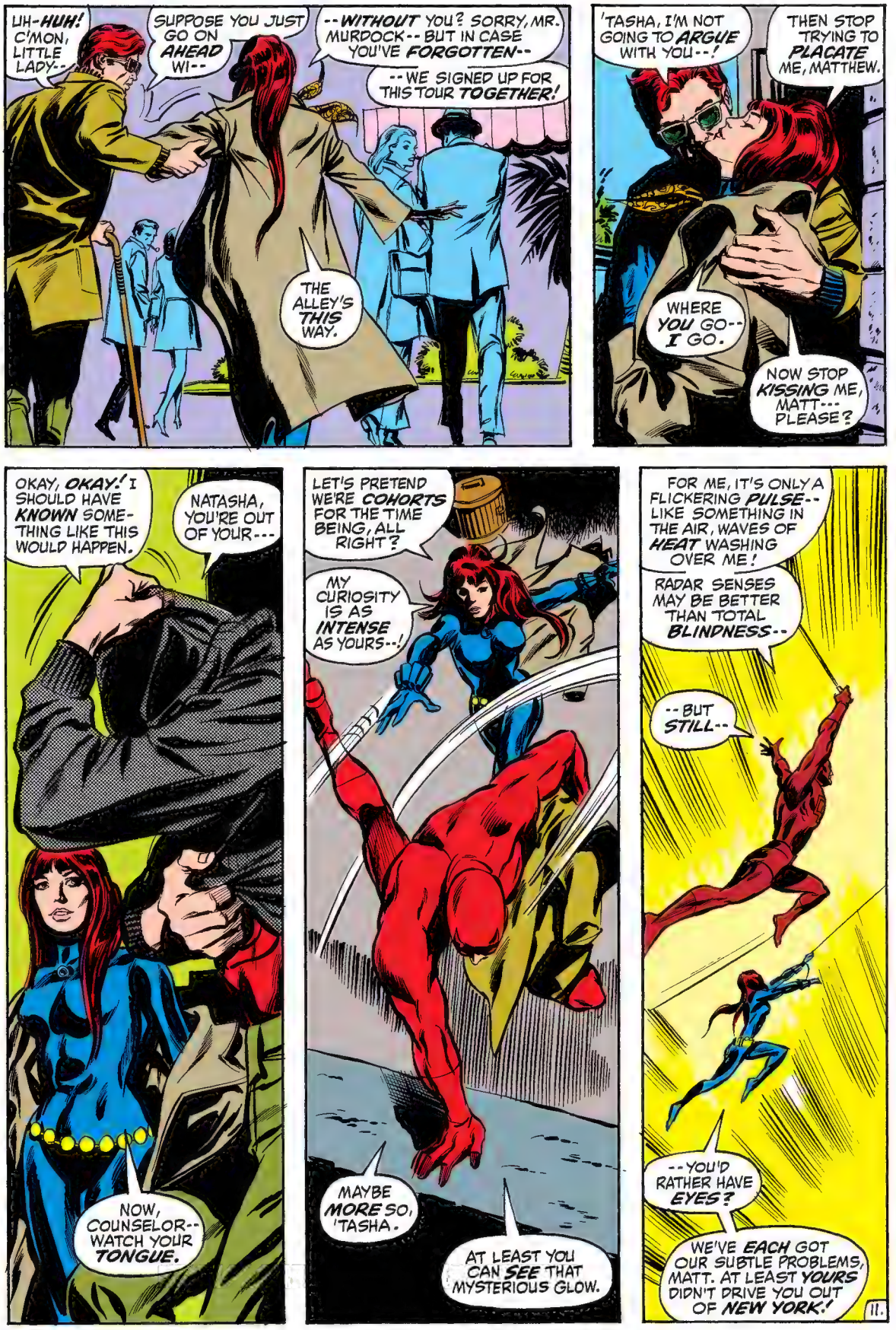
YOU GOT IT, MISTER.
BUT I STILL HAVEN'T GOT YOURS QUITE STRAIGHT. FRENCH?
YEH. WHEN 'TASHA GETS BACK, TELL HER DANNY FRENCH WAS HERE---

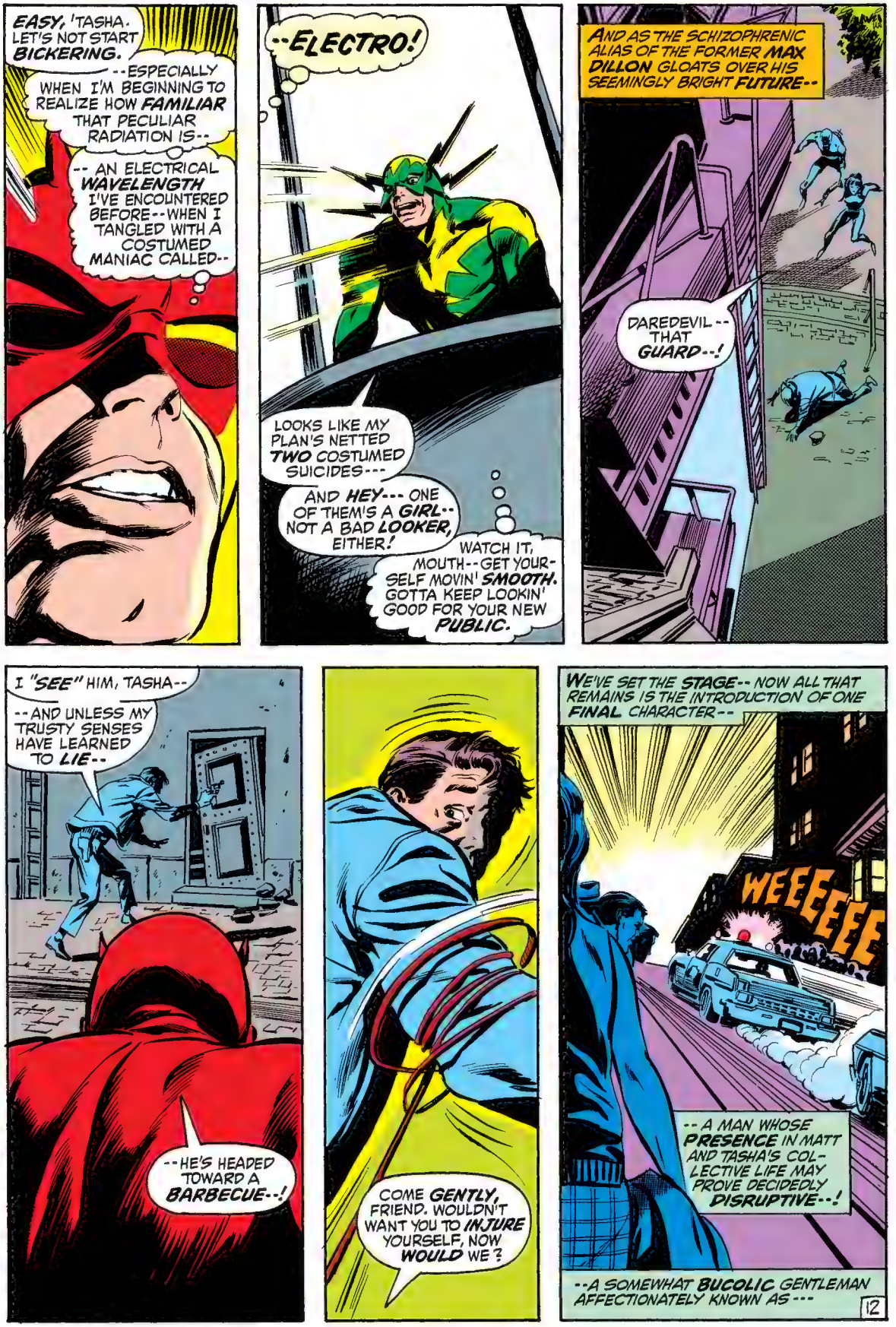

--SHE'LL KNOW WHAT IT MEANS.
I'LL JUST BET SHE WILL, FRIEND.


BUT THAT MYSTERY HAS HOURS YET TO COME TO FRUITION --FOR NOW, LET'S TURN TO DOWNTOWN 'FRISCO, WHERE A WAITING MURDOCK GREETS HIS RED-TRESSED DINNER COMPANION...
JUST BARELY ON TIME, NATASHA.
YOU ALMOST KILLED OUR RESERVATION.
SORRY, MATT. I'M NOT USED TO THE TRAFFIC HERE---
BE GLAD I MADE IT AT---

WHAT IS IT, TASHA? WHAT DO YOU SEE?
I'M---NOT SURE, MATT. I'M A STRANGER TO THIS PLACE---


---BUT SOMEHOW I'M CERTAIN TELEGRAPH HILL ISN'T SUPPOSED TO BE ACTING--LIKE THAT!
DESCRIBE IT, WIDOW.
THE COIT TOWER---IT'S GLOWING--PULSATING WILDLY.


UH-HUH! C'MON, LITTLE LADY--
SUPPOSE YOU JUST GO ON AHEAD WI--
--WITHOUT YOU? SORRY, MR. MURDOCK-- BUT IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN--
--WE SIGNED UP FOR THIS TOUR TOGETHER!
THE ALLEY'S THIS WAY.
'TASHA, I'M NOT GOING TO ARGUE WITH YOU--!
THEN STOP TRYING TO PLACATE ME, MATTHEW.
WHERE YOU GO-- I GO.
NOW STOP KISSING ME, MATT--- PLEASE?
OKAY, OKAY! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN SOMETHING LIKE THIS WOULD HAPPEN.
NATASHA, YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR---
NOW, COUNSELOR-- WATCH YOUR TONGUE.
LET'S PRETEND WE'RE COHORTS FOR THE TIME BEING, ALL RIGHT?
MY CURIOSITY IS AS INTENSE AS YOURS--!
MAYBE MORE SO, 'TASHA.
AT LEAST YOU CAN SEE THAT MYSTERIOUS GLOW.
FOR ME, IT'S ONLY A FLICKERING PULSE-- LIKE SOMETHING IN THE AIR, WAVES OF HEAT WASHING OVER ME!
RADAR SENSES MAY BE BETTER THAN TOTAL BLINDNESS--
--BUT STILL--
--YOU'D RATHER HAVE EYES?
WE'VE EACH GOT OUR SUBTLE PROBLEMS, MATT. AT LEAST YOURS DIDN'T DRIVE YOU OUT OF NEW YORK!
11.


EASY, 'TASHA. LET'S NOT START BICKERING.
--ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M BEGINNING TO REALIZE HOW FAMILIAR THAT PECULIAR RADIATION IS--
-- AN ELECTRICAL WAVELENGTH I'VE ENCOUNTERED BEFORE--WHEN I TANGLED WITH A COSTUMED MANIAC CALLED--
--ELECTRO!
LOOKS LIKE MY PLAN'S NETTED TWO COSTUMED SUICIDES---
AND HEY--- ONE OF THEM'S A GIRL-- NOT A BAD LOOKER, EITHER!
WATCH IT, MOUTH--GET YOURSELF MOVIN' SMOOTH. GOTTA KEEP LOOKIN' GOOD FOR YOUR NEW PUBLIC.
AND AS THE SCHIZOPHRENIC ALIAS OF THE FORMER MAX DILLON GLOATS OVER HIS SEEMINGLY BRIGHT FUTURE--
DAREDEVIL-- THAT GUARD--!
I "SEE" HIM, TASHA--
--AND UNLESS MY TRUSTY SENSES HAVE LEARNED TO LIE--
--HE'S HEADED TOWARD A BARBECUE--!
COME GENTLY, FRIEND. WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO INJURE YOURSELF, NOW WOULD WE?
WE'VE SET THE STAGE-- NOW ALL THAT REMAINS IS THE INTRODUCTION OF ONE FINAL CHARACTER--
WEEEEEE
-- A MAN WHOSE PRESENCE IN MATT AND TASHA'S COLLECTIVE LIFE MAY PROVE DECIDEDLY DISRUPTIVE--!
--A SOMEWHAT BUCOLIC GENTLEMAN AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS---
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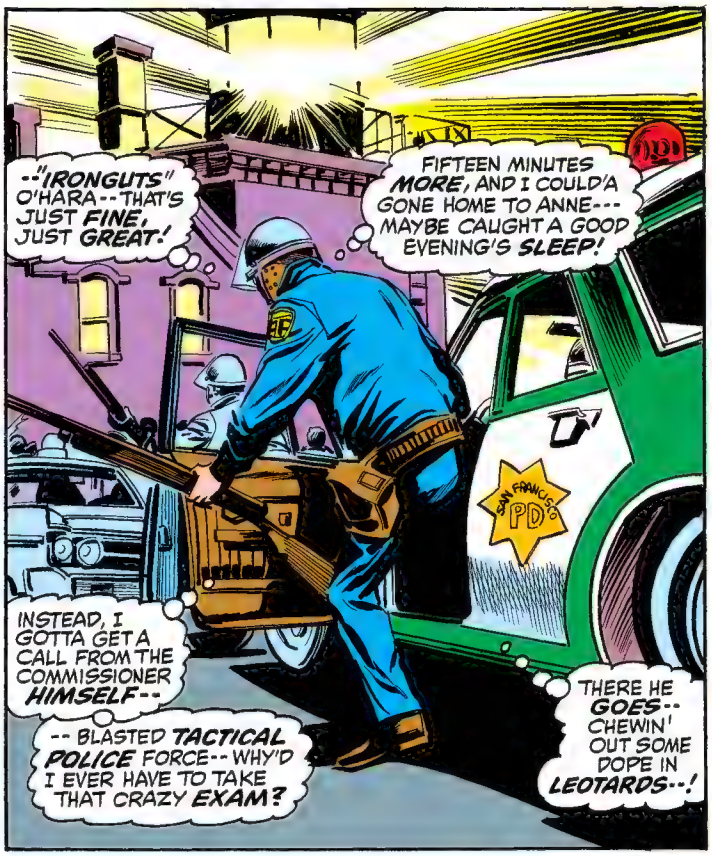
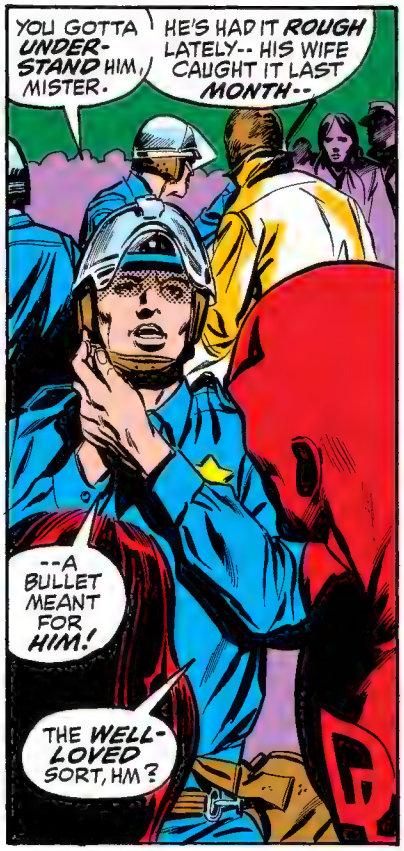

--"IRONGUTS" O'HARA--THAT'S JUST FINE, JUST GREAT!
FIFTEEN MINUTES MORE, AND I COULD'A GONE HOME TO ANNE--- MAYBE CAUGHT A GOOD EVENING'S SLEEP!
INSTEAD, I GOTTA GET A CALL FROM THE COMMISSIONER HIMSELF--
-- BLASTED TACTICAL POLICE FORCE-- WHY'D I EVER HAVE TO TAKE THAT CRAZY EXAM?
THERE HE GOES-- CHEWIN' OUT SOME DOPE IN LEOTARDS--!
SAN FRANCISCO PD

"THE POOR GUY MUST'A BEEN ON HIS WAY TO SOME SORT'A COSTUME PARTY-- GONNA WISH HE NEVER GOT STARTED AFTER 'IRONGUTS' GETS THROUGH WITH HIM--"
OKAY, KIDS--- LET'S SEE THOSE I.D.'S.
GET 'EM OUT-- I DON'T HAVE ALL NIGHT!
I.D.'S?
HE MEANS IDENTIFICATION, TASHA.
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT PROBLEMS!

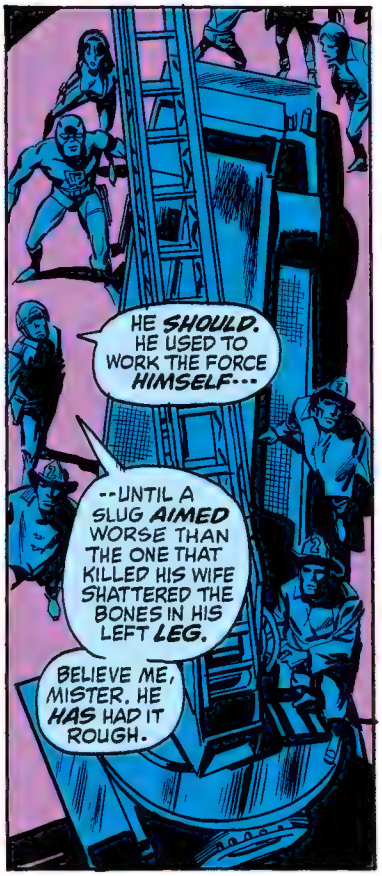
PROBLEMS? LONG-JOHNS, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT PROBLEMS ARE!
ATTACKIN' THAT GUARD WITH SOME SORT OF CABLE-- TYING HIM UP LIKE SOMEBODY'S LAUNDRY--!
AHH-- SAY, COMMISSIONER?
LOOK, MAYBE I CAN VOUCH FOR THESE TWO. SEEMS I'VE SEEN 'EM IN THE NEWS---
THEY'RE TWO'A THOSE NEW YORK SUPER-HERO TYPES!
WHAT?

ALL RIGHT, YOU TWO-- CARSON'S ONE'A MY BEST MEN-- AND I'M KINDA DISPOSED TO LISTEN TO HIM. BUT JUST IN CASE HE'S WRONG--
-- JUST IN CASE YOU TWO THINK YOU CAN GO AROUND IMPERSONATING POLICE OFFICERS IN THIS BURG--
--YOU'RE GONNA STAY PUT, "DIG"?
WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE TALK ONCE I GET THAT KOOK OUTTA THE TOWER!
WILSON-- YOU'N ANDREWS GET YOUR TAILS OVER HERE! GOT MYSELF A PLAN--!


YOU GOTTA UNDER-STAND HIM, MISTER.
HE'S HAD IT ROUGH LATELY-- HIS WIFE CAUGHT IT LAST MONTH--
--A BULLET MEANT FOR HIM!
THE WELL-LOVED SORT, HM?

IN A WAY, MISTER.
THERE ISN'T A MAN ON THE FORCE WHO WOULDN'T GIVE HIS LIFE FOR OLD "IRONGUTS"--!
LIKE THOSE BOYS IN THE TACTICAL FORCE. HE'S GONNA SEND 'EM UP THERE IN INSULATED SUITS!
ONE STROKE OF BAD LUCK --AND THOSE GUYS'LL GET THEMSELVES KILLED.

HEAR ANY OF THEM COM-PLAININ'?
THAT'S REAL HEART WARMING, OFFICER.
I HOPE O'HARA KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING.


HE SHOULD. HE USED TO WORK THE FORCE HIMSELF...
--UNTIL A SLUG AIMED WORSE THAN THE ONE THAT KILLED HIS WIFE SHATTERED THE BONES IN HIS LEFT LEG.
BELIEVE ME, MISTER. HE HAS HAD IT ROUGH.

NOT HALF SO ROUGH AS THOSE MEN ARE GOING TO HAVE IT WHEN THEY TOUCH THAT TOWER!
IF ELECTRO'S UP THERE -- HE'S NOT LET-TING THOSE COPS SCARE HIM--
--THE TOWER'S STILL SHOOTING OFF SPARKS LIKE A SHORTED CHRISTMAS TREE!

SO WHAT AM I DOING?
AM I SUPPOSED TO STAND BACK AND WATCH THOSE MEN GET KILLED--?
IS THAT WHAT I CAME TO 'FRISCO TO FIND--A DARE-DEVIL COWED BY SOME OVER-SENSITIVE COP?
THAT'S JUST NOT THE NAME OF MY GAME--IT HASN'T BEEN SO FAR---
--AND IT WON'T BE NOW!
CAREFUL, COMMISSIONER--BEFORE YOU DO SOMETHING YOU MIGHT REGRET--
--SUPPOSE WE SIT OUT THE NEXT DANCE?
YOUNG LADY, YOU'D BETTER BE DANGED FAST ON THOSE PRETTY LEGS---
--IN AN HOUR, YOU MIGHT NEED 'EM!
LET'S CROSS THAT PROVERBIAL BRIDGE WHEN WE COME TO IT, O'HARA!
YOU BOYS KEEP DOWN. I'VE PLAYED WITH THIS CHARACTER BEFORE--
--SO I THINK I KNOW THE ESSENTIAL GROUND RULES!
FIRST--HAVE TO HIT THE PEAK OF MY SWING--TIME ALL OF THIS TO THE SECOND--
15

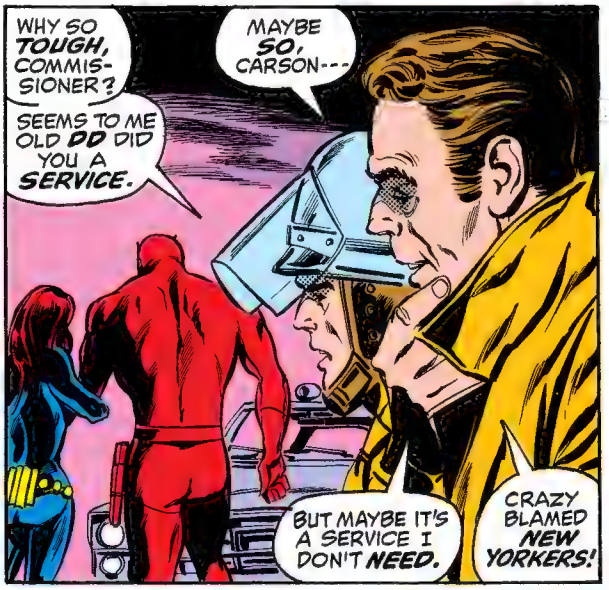
--THEN, BEFORE I LOSE MY MOMENTUM, I'VE GOT TO PRESS A CERTAIN RELEASE IN MY BILLY CLUB---
--AND NOW I START TO PRAY!
ALL THOSE YEARS OF TRAINING--LEARNING HOW TO PACE MYSELF, HOW TO LET MY MUSCLES RELAX--!
I'D BETTER HAVE DONE IT RIGHT--
--JUST AS I'VE GOT TO WHIP THE CABLE-END AROUND THAT WOODEN ROOF-CAP--AT JUST THE PROPER SPEED--
--'CAUSE IF I DON'T--THE SPIN WILL BE TOO GREAT--AND OLE DD'S A DEAD MAN!
DID IT! I'M GROUNDED!
ELECTRO, I PRESUME?
YOU GUESSED IT, BUB--
--BUT THAT'S THE LAST LUCKY CALL YOU'LL EVER MAKE!
NOW, FRIEND--- AREN'T YOU MASKED VILLAINS SUPPOSED TO WANT RECOGNITION?
OR HAVE I GOT MY PSYCHO-LOGY WRONG?
PSYCHOLOGY? ARROGANT FOOL!
YOU DARE INTIMATE THAT ELECTRO IS INSANE?
HADN'T QUITE THOUGHT OF IT THAT WAY, SPARKLES---
--BUT NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT--!
CHOK!
CRETIN! DO YOU THINK I'M UNAWARE OF YOUR DESPERATE PANICCCCCCC
16

THAT LAST KICK SURE CONNECTED-- SENDING HIM RIGHT THROUGH THE TOWER WINDOW!
BUT-- THE WAY HE'S BEEN SPEAKING-- SWITCHING FROM SLANG TO SOME SORT OF PERVERSE BAROQUE ENGLISH--!
SMASH!
UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS-- ELECTRO'S ONE SICK MAN!
THINK YOU'RE PRETTY CUTE, EH, HORNHEAD?
YEAH, YOU CREEPS ARE ALL THE SAME--- JUST WHEN A GUY GETS MOVIN'-- JUST WHEN THINGS ARE BREAKIN' RIGHT--
--YOU WRECK IT ALL!
WELL, BUSTER-- ELECTRO'S GONNA WRECK YOU!
YOU HEAR THAT, LITTLE WOMAN?
LOOKS LIKE YOUR RED-SUITED FRIEND'S GOT HIMSELF SOME TROUBLE--!
--AND LORD, I HOPE HE'S STRONG ENOUGH TO HANDLE IT!
WE OWE THAT GUY OUR LIVES!
--IF NOT FOR HIM, WE WOULD'VE WALKED RIGHT INTO THAT MESS!
A MESS GROWING RAPIDLY MORE CHAOTIC, AS, IN THE ROARING ELECTRICAL INFERNO WHICH WAS ONCE THE TOWER CONTROL ROOM---
PAIN-- SPLITTING MY SKULL --ECHO-ING IN MY BRAIN--!
WHO DARES STRIKE OUT AGAINST ME?
WAIT-- WAIT, I KNOW MY TREACHEROUS FOE---
17.

--DARE-DEVIL!
HE MUST HAVE STRUCK SOME MACHINERY-- SHORT-CIRCUITED THE CHARGE HE'D PLACED AROUND THE TOWER!
LOOKS LIKE IT'S TIME I MADE MY MOVE!
THAT SHATTERED WINDOW-- HAVE TO MISS THE JAGGED EDGES!
EXCELLENT, MASKED MAN. YOU PROVE YOURSELF MORE OF A FOOL THAN I WOULD HAVE TAKEN YOU FOR.
PERHAPS NOW WE MAY BRING AN END TO OUR LITTLE BATTLE--
--AN END-- WITH THE VICTOR--- ELECTRO!
S'AT SO, HANDSOME?
I'LL BET YOU'RE THAT BRAVE ALL THE TIME-- WHENEVER THE ODDS'RE IN YOUR FAVOR.
AFTER ALL, SPARKLES --YOU'RE THE DUDE WITH THE ELECTRIC SHIELD!
THAT ONE CAUGHT HIM RIGHT IN THE OLE EGO-CENTER.
RADAR-SENSES TELL ME HE'S DROPPING HIS POWER-LEVEL-- RELAXING THE PARAMETERS OF HIS AURA--
UH-OH. HEARTBEAT'S RISING. HE'S ABOUT TO--
IDIOT! DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE YOU CAN DEFEAT ME --WITH OR WITHOUT MY FATE-GIVEN POWER?
YOU'RE LIKE THE OTHERS-- YOU THINK THAT BECAUSE I'M NOT REFINED --NOT SO CULTURED--
--YOU THINK YOU CAN MOCK ME-- RIDICULE ME!
WHAK!
UNNNH!
NOT ON YOUR LIFE, BUSTER!
18

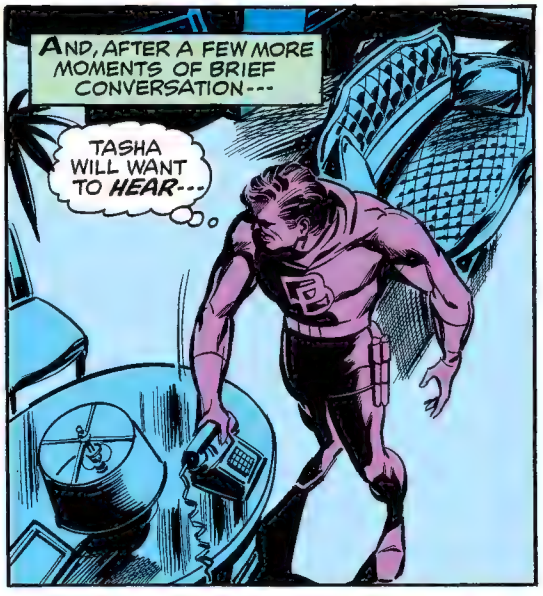
I'VE PUT UP WITH THAT JUNK ALL'A MY LIFE--
PEOPLE LAUGHIN' AT ME 'CAUSE'A THE WAY I TALKED--
WELL, FRIEND-- NOBODY LAUGHS AT MAX DILLON-- NOT NOW --NOT EVER!
SO THAT'S IT---
--DILLON HAS SOME SORT OF KING-SIZED PERSECUTION COMPLEX---
--THAT'S WHY HE'S GONE SCHIZO -- TRYING TO SPEAK LIKE THE OTHER CORNBALL BADDIES---
--AND JUST NOT BEING ABLE TO HACK THAT GAME!
GREAT-- USUALLY I DEAL WITH THE MANIACS, THE SCREAMING EGOTISTS--
--NOW I'VE GOT TO TRY AND HANDLE A GUY WITH INFERIORITY PROBLEMS--
--SOMEBODY WHO COULD PROBABLY FRY ME LIKE OVERCOOKED TOAST!
HEADS UP, SWEET-HEART--
--WAIT-- YOU'RE TWISTING-- STRUGGLING TOO HARD---
KRAASSH!
--FALLING NEAR-- THE WINDOW!
ONCE AGAIN, YOU UNDER-ESTIMATE ME, MY FRIEND.
A SMELL SET-BACK AT WORST! I'LL TURN THIS REVERSAL TO MY ADVANTAGE--
--AND ELECTRO'S NAME SHALL YET BE CLEARED--!
19

UTILIZING THE INNATE ELECTRICAL AFFINITY IN THE MOLECULES OF THE TOWER WALL--
--I PROVIDE MYSELF WITH A SUB-ATOMIC RAMP---
--AND EVEN AS YOU BEMOAN MY FATE---
BAM
BAM
IT'S NO GOOD! SOMETHING'S REPELLING OUR BULLETS--
WE JUST CAN'T HIT HIM!
BAM
--ELECTRO MAKES GOOD HIS ESCAPE!
THEN PERHAPS THIS GAMBIT WAS WELL-PLAYED, AFTER ALL!
YOU'LL REMEMBER MY NAME, FRIENDS--- AND WHEN NEXT WE MEET---
-- THE GAME WILL BE CHECK--AND MATE!
AND WITH A HARSH CACKLE--OF LAUGHTER--OF DANCING ELECTRICITY--- THE GREEN AND GOLD FIGURE TURNS--AND SPEEDS INTO THE COOL BAY NIGHT--!
--- SO MAYBE THIS TIME YOU WERE RIGHT, FRIEND.
BUT REMEMBER THIS, "DAREDEVIL"--- I'VE GOT MY EYE ON YOU--AND I'M NOT GONNA FORGET THIS LITTLE ADVENTURE--UNDERSTAND?
SURE, COMMISSIONER. WE GET THE PICTURE.
NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US? I THINK WE'VE GOT AN INTERRUPTED DINNER DATE TO TAKE CARE OF.

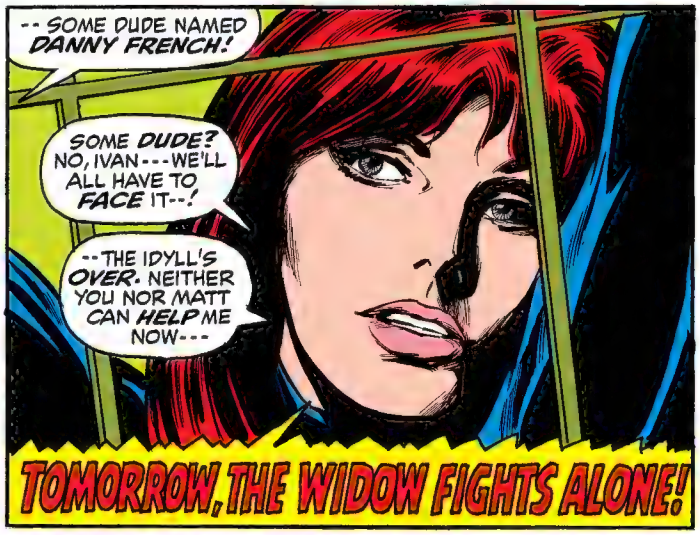

WHY SO TOUGH, COMMISSIONER?
MAYBE SO, CARSON---
SEEMS TO ME OLD DD DID YOU A SERVICE.
BUT MAYBE IT'S A SERVICE I DON'T NEED.
CRAZY BLAMED NEW YORKERS!

LATER, AFTER AN EVENING SPENT UNWINDING THE DAY'S KNOTTED TENSIONS--
THE PHONE--- I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN!
FOGGY PROMISED TO CALL THIS EVENING --- TO TELL ME WHAT HE'S DECIDED!
KRING

MATT? CHALK UP ANOTHER VICTORY FOR YOUR PERSUASIVENESS.
LOOKS LIKE FRANKLIN NELSON WON'T HANG UP HIS GLOVES-- FOR A WHILE, ANYWAY.
FOGGY, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW GLAD THAT MAKES ME.


AND, AFTER A FEW MORE MOMENTS OF BRIEF CONVERSATION---
TASHA WILL WANT TO HEAR---

--- SHE'S BEEN FEELING GUILTY ABOUT FOGGY'S PLANS TO RESIGN AS DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BUT NOW--
--NATASHA?
IVAN-- WHAT'S WRONG?
YOU GOT ME, PAL. ALL I DID WAS TELL HER A GUY WAS ASKIN' FOR HER---


-- SOME DUDE NAMED DANNY FRENCH!
SOME DUDE? NO, IVAN--- WE'LL ALL HAVE TO FACE IT--!
--THE IDYLL'S OVER. NEITHER YOU NOR MATT CAN HELP ME NOW---
TOMORROW, THE WIDOW FIGHTS ALONE!

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
20¢
88
JUNE
02459
DAREDEVIL™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE MA UT FEAR!
YOU REFUSED TO SERVE ME, MASKED MAN! SO NOW--YOU DIE!
HE'S BACK-- AND HE'S OUT FOR BLOOD!!
KILLGRAVE--
THE PURPLE MAN!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™

CALL HIM KILLGRAVE!
BATTLEFIELD: WIND WHIPS THROUGH GRAY AND BROWN CANYONS OF COLD MORTAR AND STONE--A BRISK BAY WIND, BITTER WITH THE BITE OF THE EARLY DAWN--DISTANT AND HOLLOW LIKE THE ECHO OF A DESERT BREEZE--
TWO STEEL-SHELLED FORMS LEAP IN THE NEW MORNING LIGHT--THEIR HOODS CATCHING THE PALE, CLOUDED SUNLIGHT, GLINTING AS THEY TURN DOWN EMPTY MONDAY-MORNING STREETS IN UPTOWN SAN FRANCISCO--
AGAIN AND AGAIN, METAL MEETS PAVEMENT--SCREECHING, WAILING--CRYING LIKE WOUNDED SOLDIERS CAUGHT OUT OF TIME AND PLACE--TRAPPED ON THIS URBAN BATTLEGROUND--LOST IN SOME TWISTED DETROITIAN NIGHTMARE--!
SKREEEEEEK
899 Z 668

STAN LEE, EDITOR / GERRY CONWAY, WRITER / GENE COLAN, ARTIST / TOM PALMER, INKER / JON COSTA, LETTERER

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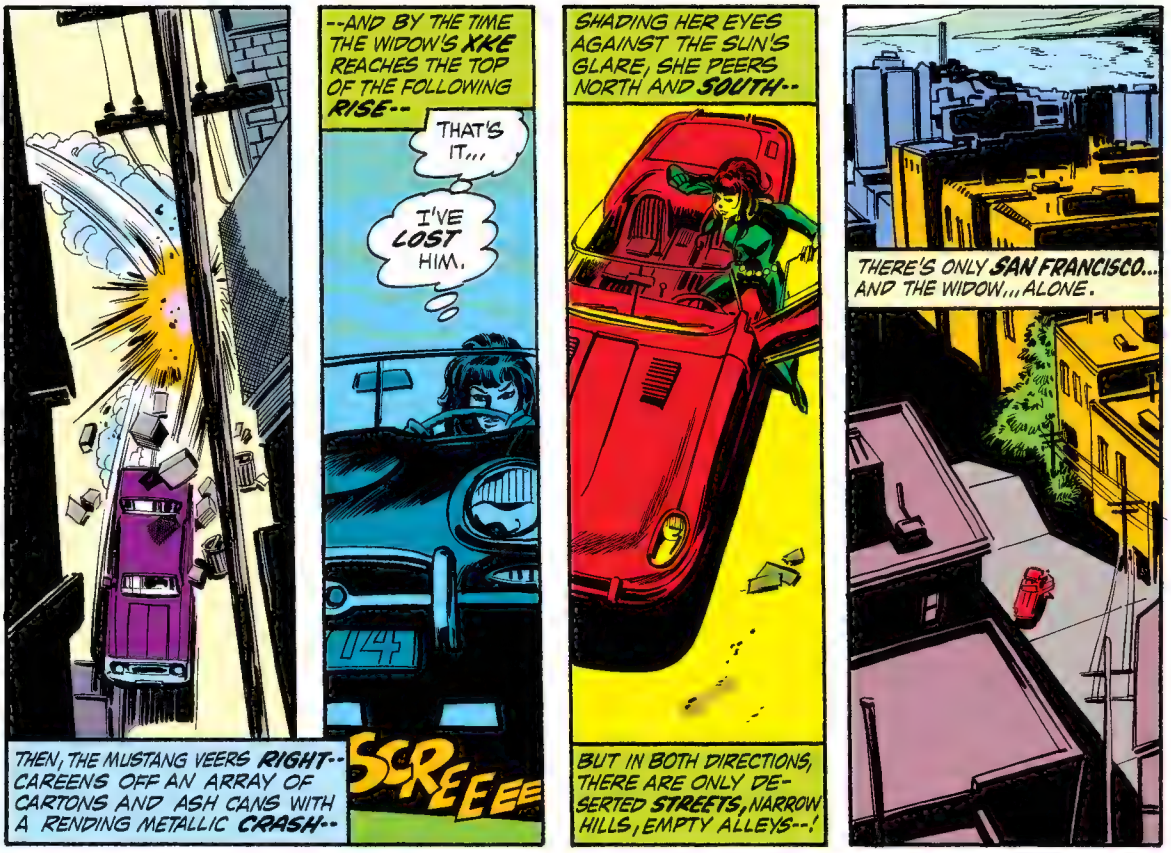
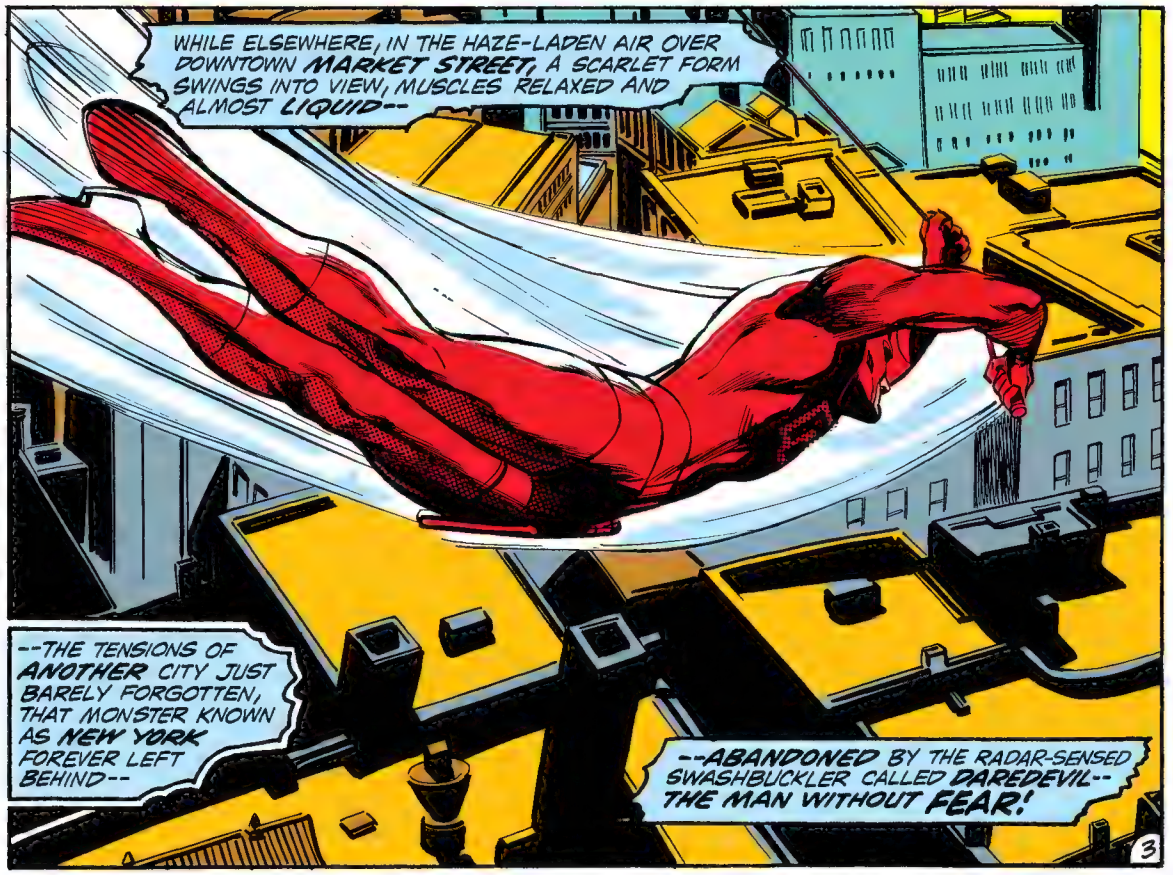
HER NAME IS MADAME NATASHA ROMANOFF--KNOWN TO THE WORLD AS THE BLACK WIDOW--AND EVEN AS SHE STRAINS AGAINST HER RESTRAINING SEATBELT--
--SHE WONDERS ABOUT THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL--WONDERS IF HE WORRIES FOR HER--
--PERHAPS WONDERS FOR THE THOUSANDTH TIME, IF HE CARES FOR HER--AS SHE DOES FOR HIM.
AND THEN THOSE THOUGHTS ARE SHATTERED, BROKEN--THE THOUGHTS OF AN INSTANT SPLIT IN TIME AND SPACE--THOUGHTS THROWN RUDELY BACK TO THE MOMENT AT HAND--!
HE'S GETTING AWAY--
TAKING THAT SIDESTREET--
--I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM--I'VE GOT TO!
SCREEEEEE
HIS NAME IS DANNY FRENCH, AND HIS PURPOSE IN TRYING TO CONTACT HER IS STILL A MYSTERY--AS MUCH A MYSTERY AS HER FEARS CONCERNING HIM--
TAKING THE CORNER ON TWO WHEELS, THE MUSTANG ROARS DOWN THE NARROW BACK STREET--LEAPING EACH DIP AND RISE AS THOUGH ALIVE--!
IT'S NO USE! HE KNOWS THE STREETS SO MUCH BETTER THAN I DO--
HE'S GAINING ON ME--I'M LOSING HIM!
2

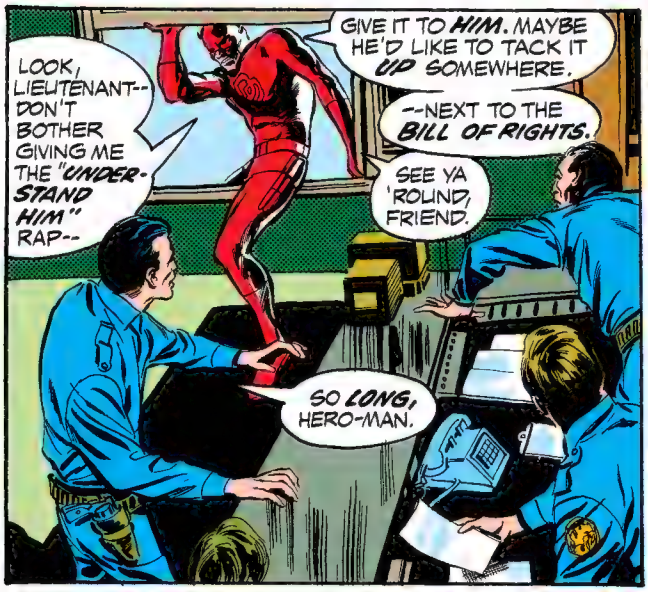

THEN, THE MUSTANG VEERS RIGHT-- CAREENS OFF AN ARRAY OF CARTONS AND ASH CANS WITH A RENDING METALLIC CRASH--
SCREEEE
--AND BY THE TIME THE WIDOW'S XKE REACHES THE TOP OF THE FOLLOWING RISE--
THAT'S IT...
I'VE LOST HIM.
SHADING HER EYES AGAINST THE SUN'S GLARE, SHE PEERS NORTH AND SOUTH--
BUT IN BOTH DIRECTIONS, THERE ARE ONLY DESERTED STREETS, NARROW HILLS, EMPTY ALLEYS--!
THERE'S ONLY SAN FRANCISCO... AND THE WIDOW... ALONE.

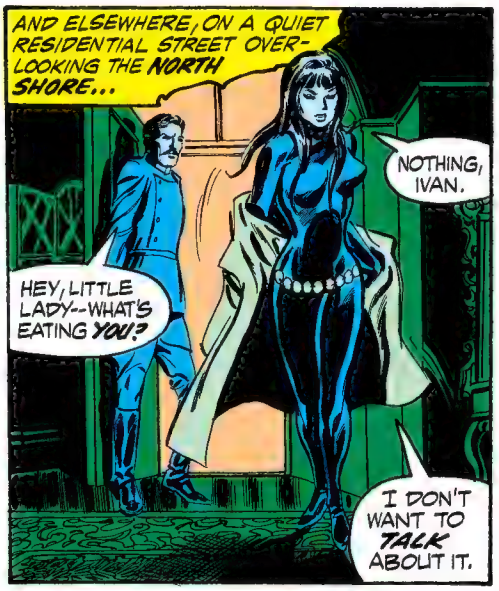

WHILE ELSEWHERE, IN THE HAZE-LADEN AIR OVER DOWNTOWN MARKET STREET, A SCARLET FORM SWINGS INTO VIEW, MUSCLES RELAXED AND ALMOST LIQUID--
--THE TENSIONS OF ANOTHER CITY JUST BARELY FORGOTTEN, THAT MONSTER KNOWN AS NEW YORK FOREVER LEFT BEHIND--
--ABANDONED BY THE RADAR-SENSED SWASHBUCKLER CALLED DAREDEVIL-- THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!

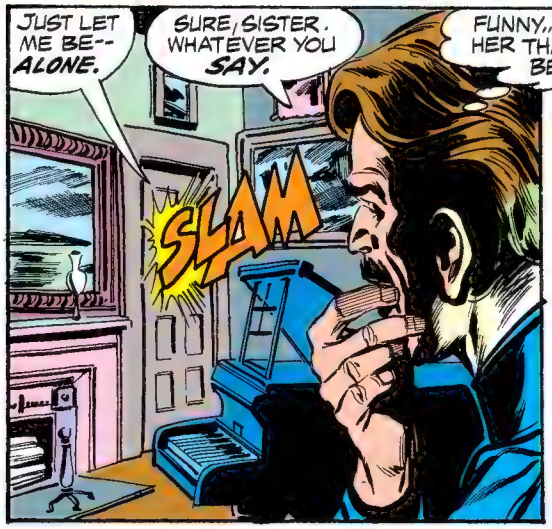
HELLO, LIEUTENANT--YOU'RE LOOKING FAIRLY GRIM FOR A MAN WITH A GROWING REPUTATION.
I GATHER THE LOCAL PRESS MADE QUITE A BIG THING OUT OF OUR MEETING WITH ELECTRO LAST WEEK--
WITH YOU AND COMMISSIONER O'HARA AS THE TWO DARLING STARS!
DAREDEVIL! YOU'RE A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES, OLD BUDDY!
THE COMMISSIONER'S BEEN DYING TO GET A ROPE AROUND THAT NECK OF YOURS FOR THE PAST TEN DAYS!
THINK I DON'T KNOW IT, CARSON?
FACT IS, THAT'S THE PRIMARY REASON I'M HERE.
SOCIAL CALLS ASIDE--IT MIGHT JUST BE THE TIME TO PATCH THINGS UP WITH OLE "IRONGUTS"..
--BEFORE HE DECIDES TO PATCH THINGS UP WITH ME--KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
YOU'RE TALKING TO A GUY WHO'S WORKED WITH HIM, DD.
--AND IF THERE'S ONE THING I KNOW ABOUT O'HARA--
--HE DESPISES PUBLICITY.
COMMISSIONER O'HARA
HE THINKS YOU'RE A GLORY-SEEKER, DD--AND SO DO MOST OF THE MEN IN THE DEPARTMENT.
ALL EXCEPT ME, OF COURSE...
...WHICH IS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY I'M ON THE OUTS WITH "IRONGUTS" AS IT IS.
HMM...LOOKS LIKE HE'S IN ONE OF HIS BETTER MOODS...!
BLAST IT, I'M THROUGH ARGUING! YOU GOT THAT, MISTER MAYOR?
YEAH? THE SAME TO YOU, BUSTER!
WELL, WELL, WELL... IF IT ISN'T THE FANCY-PANTS NEW YORKER HIMSELF.
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU, PAL...
4

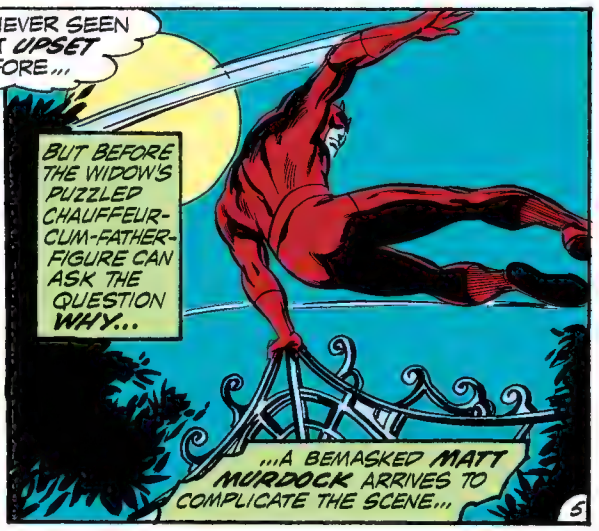
I'LL SAY IT ONCE, FRIEND: 'FRISCO'S MY TOWN--
I DON'T NEED SOME NUT IN HIS UNDERWEAR TO TELL ME HOW TO POLICE IT, GOT ME?
I'VE GOT YOU, O'HARA.
NOW GET ME: I'M STAYING-- WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR PERMISSION.
OR HADN'T YOU HEARD? IT'S A FREE COUNTRY.

CARSON-- GET THAT BUM OUTTA HERE!
PLEASE, COMMISSIONER-- YOU'RE FRIGHTENING ME!
IF I SEE HIS UGLY FACE AROUND THIS OFFICE AGAIN--
HEY, DAREDEVIL-- HOLD UP.


LOOK, LIEUTENANT-- DON'T BOTHER GIVING ME THE "UNDERSTAND HIM" RAP--
GIVE IT TO HIM. MAYBE HE'D LIKE TO TACK IT UP SOMEWHERE.
--NEXT TO THE BILL OF RIGHTS.
SEE YA 'ROUND, FRIEND.
SO LONG, HERO-MAN.


AND ELSEWHERE, ON A QUIET RESIDENTIAL STREET OVERLOOKING THE NORTH SHORE...
NOTHING, IVAN.
HEY, LITTLE LADY--WHAT'S EATING YOU?
I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.


JUST LET ME BE-- ALONE.
SURE, SISTER. WHATEVER YOU SAY.
SLAM


FUNNY... NEVER SEEN HER THAT UPSET BEFORE...
BUT BEFORE THE WIDOW'S PUZZLED CHAUFFEUR-CUM-FATHER-FIGURE CAN ASK THE QUESTION WHY...
...A BEMASKED MATT MURDOCK ARRIVES TO COMPLICATE THE SCENE...

DON'T LOOK SO SHOCKED, IVE.
I ALWAYS TAKE THE BACK-ENTRANCE... BUT WAIT A SECOND...!
...YOU WANTA KNOW WHAT'S WRONG, RIGHT?
C'MON DOWN, MURDOCK...
...IT'S ABOUT TIME I TOLD YOU A FEW THINGS...
...ABOUT ME...AN' ABOUT NATASHA.
NOW THE STAGE SEEMS FULLY SET...
...ALL THAT REMAINS IS THE ENTRANCE OF ONE FINAL CHARACTER...
...AS, ON AN AVENUE JUST OFF MARKET STREET...
...WHY YOU'VE MOVED TO SAN FRANSISCO, DD?
COULDN'T STAND THE SMOG IN NEW YORK, DAVE.
WHY ELSE?
WHY ELSE INDEED?
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS-- THESE MONTHS OF CAREFUL PLANNING--
--SOMEHOW, HE'S FOUND OUT!
I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE HAD HIM KILLED MONTHS AGO!
AH, C'MON, BOSS...WHAT'S ONE COSTUMED FREAK?
YEH, SO WHAT IF HE'S HIT THE BAY AREA-- WE CAN TAKE HIM, RIGHT, CHICO?
OF COURSE. HOW CAN HE BE A MATCH--
6

--FOR THE MAN CALLED KILLGRAVE!
MY FRIENDS, YOU FLATTER ME.
I BELIEVE YOUR WORDS HAVE CALMED ME. YES, I FEEL MUCH SAFER NOW--WITH YOU AT MY SIDE.
BUT STILL-- DAREDEVIL MUST DIE!
ARE YOU SURE, BOSS?
I MEAN, IF THE COPS LIKE 'IM--
THEY DESPISE HIM.
WE'LL HAVE NO TROUBLE FROM THEM, I ASSURE YOU.
SOUNDS GOOD, BOSS.
WHAT'CHA WANT US TO DO?
WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS DONE...
...OBEY ME... TRUST ME.
CHICO... YOU KNOW I DEPEND ON YOU. DON'T LET ME DOWN.
WHATEVER YOU SAY, BOSS.
GOOD.
I'LL GIVE YOU ORDERS IN A MOMENT--
--BUT FIRST--I'VE SOMETHING ELSE TO ATTEND TO.
NOW WHATEVER COULD THAT BE, KILLY?
...AS IF OLD LUCY DIDN'T KNOW!

I DON'T GET IT, CHICO--HOWCUM WHEN KILLGRAVE TALKS TO US, IT ALL SEEMS COOL--
--BUT ONCE WE GET OUTTA THAT ROOM--!
SHADDUP, BERNIE.
ALL YOU GOTTA KNOW IS WE GOT A JOB TO DO--
--AND MISTER, WE'RE GONNA DO IT!
...EASY, LUCY. I'M NOT IN THE MOOD FOR FUN...
THINGS WERE GOING PRETTY WELL-- TILL HE SHOWED UP.
WHATCHA GONNA DO, KILLY?
DO? BABY, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING I CAN DO--
"--I'VE GOT TO DESTROY THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL!"
...DIDN'T KNOW HOW MUCH THIS DANNY FRENCH CHARACTER UPSET TASHA.
BUT... WHY, IVAN?
WHAT'S THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HER AND FRENCH?
MATT, I CAN ONLY GUESS.
I FIGURE IT'S TIED UP WITH WHAT SHE LEARNED AS A SPY--
--BUT THAT'S ONE PART OF HER LIFE I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.
THAT'S RIGHT, IVAN. SHE NEVER TOLD ME--
--HOW SHE AND I MET?
MAYBE SHE CAN'T REMEMBER, MURDOCK. SHE WAS ONLY A CHILD...
...AND IT WAS A TIME MOST OF THE WORLD WOULD LIKE TO FORGET.
WORLD WAR TWO: AT THE SEIGE OF STALINGRAD... THAT'S WHERE I FIRST FOUND THE LITTLE MADAME NATASHA ROMANOFF!

"IT WAS LATE AUTUMN OF 1942--THE GERMANS HAD BEEN FIGHTING ON THE PERIPHERY OF THE CITY SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR--AND WERE NOW ON THE VERGE--OF DESTROYING IT--
"MANY OF US HAD ALREADY LEFT, JOINING THE SOVIET EMBANKMENT ON THE VOLGA RIVER--BUT I STAYED TO THE LAST--SEARCHING AIMLESSLY FOR A DEAD SISTER I KNEW I'D NEVER SEE AGAIN--
"MY FRIEND, THE VERY SKY SEEMED TO SEETHE WITH CRIMSON LIGHTNING--THE AIR POUNDING WITH THE THROB OF MAN-MADE THUNDER--FOR HOW MANY HOURS I HAD BEEN RUNNING THAT DAY, I SWEAR I MAY NEVER KNOW--
"BUT I RAN--UNTIL I HEARD THE CALL--A DISTANT CRY FOR HELP, BORNE ON THE SOOT-LADEN WIND--
"THEN, I SAW HER IN A SUDDEN CLEARING OF THE SMOKE--A WOMAN NO OLDER THAN I, CLUTCHING A YOUNG CHILD AS SHE CALLED FROM HER BURNING BALCONY--
"I RUSHED FORWARD--
"--SHE DROPPED THE CHILD INTO MY ARMS--
"--AND IN THE NEXT MOMENT--
"ONE WOMAN'S WORLD ENDED--AND A YOUNG GIRL'S BEGAN."
9

THOSE REMAINING WEEKS WERE A NIGHTMARE.
FROM THE SHORE OF THE VOLGA, WE WATCHED OUR CITY DIE--
--WE WATCHED THE CONTINUING DESTRUCTION WE'D KNOWN SINCE THE REVOLUTION SO MANY YEARS BEFORE.
WE WATCHED HELPLESSLY...THE CHILD, BECAUSE SHE WAS A CHILD... AND I,,,BECAUSE I CLAIMED I WAS HER FATHER. BOTH OF US,,,HELPLESS WHEN OUR LAND NEEDED US MOST...
PERHAPS THAT EXPLAINS WHAT WE DID,,, AFTERWARD.
"IN THE YEARS AFTER THE WAR, YOUNG NATASHA DID WELL IN HER CLASSES,,,
"SHE WAS ALWAYS AT THE HEAD OF HER GRADE,,,
",,,ALWAYS THE MOST PERFECT ATHLETE,,,
",,,AND WHEN IT CAME TO IT, ON THE ORDER OF HER COMMISSAR,,, THE MOST PERFECT SPY!
"DURING HER TRAINING, SHE MET AND MARRIED A YOUNG MAN WHO LATER BECAME THE RED GUARDIAN...
",,,WE BOTH BID HER FAREWELL WHEN SHE FIRST LEFT FOR YOUR COUNTRY,,,
",,,BUT ONLY I KNEW SHE WAS LEAVING,,, FOR GOOD."

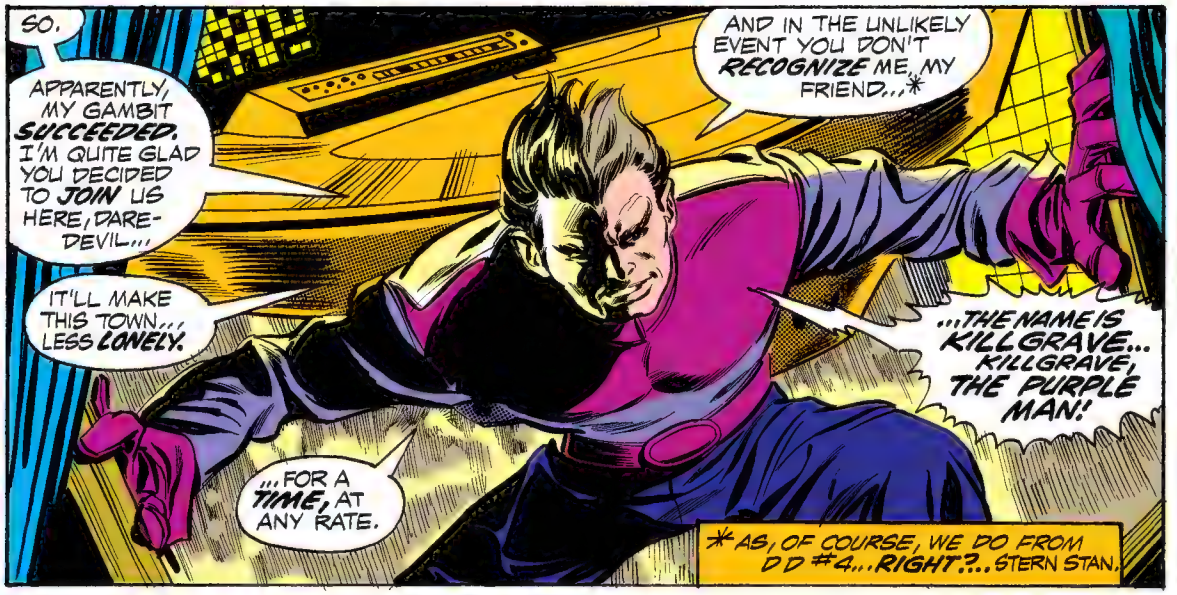
--AND THAT'S IT, MATT.
WE DIDN'T MEET AGAIN FOR THREE YEARS... BUT THAT'S ANOTHER STORY.
...ONE THAT'LL TELL US NOTHING ABOUT DANNY FRENCH?
RIGHT. WHAT HAPPENED AFTER SHE LEFT RUSSIA--
--IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, IVAN.
DANNY FRENCH IS MY CONCERN... NOT YOURS!
NATASHA!
KID, I WAS ONLY TRYING TO--
IT'S ALL RIGHT, IVAN-- I UNDER-STAND.
I APPRECIATE YOUR WORRY-- BUT IT'S JUST MISPLACED.
TASH, WILL YOU LISTEN TO ME--?
NOT NOW... NOT TILL THIS THING'S OVER... AND FINISHED.
AND MATT--THAT'S SOMETHING I'VE GOT TO DO ALONE!
PLEASE BELIEVE ME. PLEASE, MATT.
HONEY, YOU'RE GOING ABOUT THIS MESS ALL WRONG.
LET ME--
SORRY, MATT. MAYBE LATER--WE'LL TALK!
AND AS THE DOOR CLOSES ON THE WIDOW'S RETREATING FORM...
GOING AFTER HER, MATT?
MAYBE I SHOULD--?
STAY HERE, IVAN... AND WATCH THAT HOMING DEVICE.
IF EITHER OF US GETS INTO TROUBLE...
...WE'LL NEED YOU TO BAIL US OUT!

MOMENTS LATER, AS THE LOW-SLUNG XKE LEAVES A TRAIL OF GRAY DUST AND BEWILDERED PEDESTRAINS--
--A SCARLET-HUED SHADOW DARTS FROM CORNER TO CANYON IN SILENT PURSUIT--!
BUT, EVEN AS THE WIDOW'S CAR SLOWS FOR PASSING FILE OF TRUCKS AT A DOWN-TOWN INTERSECTION...
GREAT! SOME KIND OF EXPLOSION OFF KINGSTON STREET...!
SOUNDS BAD... SO NOW WHAT DO I DO?
THIS PAST WEEK, I'VE BEEN TRYING TO MAKE SOME SORT OF POINT ABOUT MY BEING IN 'FRISCO--
--TRYING TO INVOLVE MYSELF IN THE CITY, IN ITS PEOPLE--EVEN AGAINST O'HARA'S RATHER REPETITIOUS WARNINGS--!
577
IF SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENS, AND I DON'T SHOW--EVEN TO MAKE A TOKEN EFFORT AT HELPING--
--DAREDEVIL'S NAME WILL BE MUD!
AT ANY RATE, IT'S A CHANCE TO SEE IF THIS NEW RADIO RECEIVER I INSTALLED WORKS--
--AND NATURALLY--IT DOES.
--CAR 4703 REPORTING: LOOKS LIKE THAT EXPLO-SION'S SUPPOSED TO COVER A ROBBERY, LIEUTENANT--THE WILLIAMS BUILDING OFF KINGSTON STREET--!
THAT SEALS IT.
I CAN'T IGNORE A CRIME... I'VE GOT TO SHOW.
AND AFTER ALL... NATASHA'S A BIG GIRL NOW... SHE CAN TAKE CARE OF HERSELF... I HOPE.
THE WAY THINGS LOOK--SHE'LL JUST HAVE TO!
12

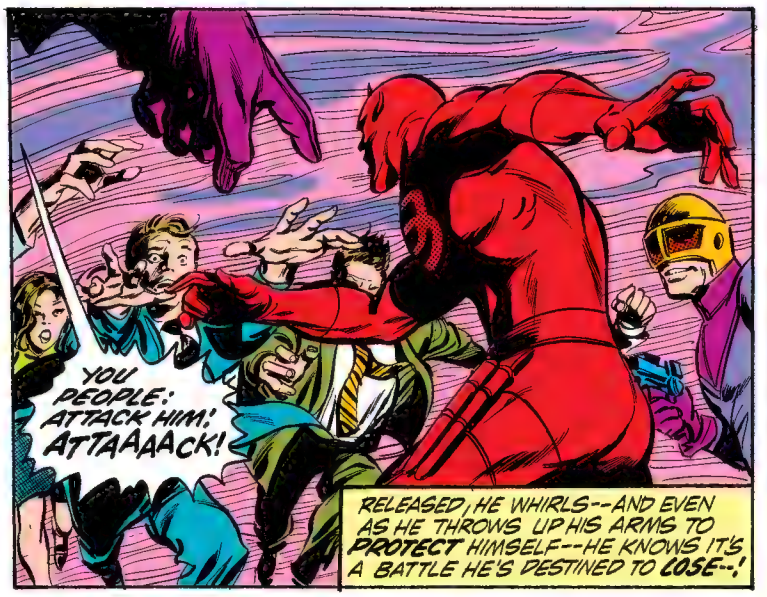
AND, IN THE SMOKING CONFINES OF THE BOMB-SHAKEN WILLIAMS BUILDING, A QUARTET OF GRIM FIGURES MOVE THROUGH A GROWING PURPLE MIST--THEIR MOTIONS PECULIARLY SELF-ASSURED, THE GRIM LAUGHTER ECHOING FROM THEIR FACE-PLATES STARK IN ITS COLD AND TOTAL MOCKERY--!
LOOK AT THEM, RENAUD--THEY'VE BECOME SHEEP, AS COMPLETELY WITHOUT WILL AS THE MOST INSENTIENT AMOEBA!
AND IF ALL GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN--THE ONE CALLED DAREDEVIL WILL SOON JOIN THEIR HELPLESS RANKS!
YEH, CHICO... THAT GAS 'A KILLGRAVE'S SURE WORKS UP A STORM.
IT'S ALMOST... ALMOST LIKE HE WAS HERE HIMSELF.
SHADDUP, BERNIE.
HE IS HERE--LISTENIN' ON OUR SUIT RADIOS!
DON'T TALK--MOVE!
I WOULDN'T QUITE SUGGEST THAT, OLD FRIEND--
YOU MIGHT JUST FIND IT A BIT HARD TO MAKE ANY KIND OF MOTION--AFTER WE GET THROUGH SPARRING!
NOW WHICH OF YOU WANTS TO BE FIR--UNNNNH!
CRIPES! WILL YA LOOKIT THAT?
THE GAS HIT 'IM HARDER 'N THE FLAT SIDE OF A GRIDDLE--!
WHAT WAS THAT YOU WUZ SAYIN' ABOUT SPARRING, MISTER--?
SOMETHING'S ATTACKING MY SENSES--CAN'T SEEM TO CATCH MY BALANCE--
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?
I SAID SHADDUP, BERNIE!
I'LL HANDLE THINGS FROM HERE--!
13

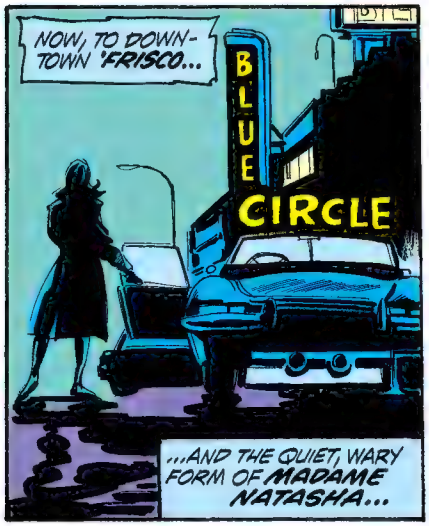
SLOWLY, FEELING THE ENERGY DRAIN FROM HIS KNEES AND CALVES, HE STUMBLES, RISES TO HIS FEET--!
THAT GAS-- SOMEHOW, IT'S DISRUPTING MY NERVOUS SYSTEM--
-- SHORT-CIRCUITING MY COORDINATION!
AS THOUGH THROUGH A HEAVY VEIL, HE "SEES" AN ABRUPT MOVEMENT IN THE SHADOW-CLOUDED RADAR-DARKNESS BEFORE HIM--
--PAINFULLY HE TRIES TO TWIST SIDEWAYS--
--AND MEETS THE SUDDEN ONSLAUGHT OF A DOZEN FISTS!
NOW, BERNIE-- NOW!
MOVE THOSE ARMS, YOU BLUNDERING MORON--
MOVE THEM!
AND ELSEWHERE, SHORT BLOCKS AWAY...
VEEEEEE
STRANGE...I WOULD HAVE SWORN MATT WAS TRAILING ME... BUT NOW HE'S GONE.
I... WANTED IT THIS WAY, DIDN'T I? TO FIGHT ALONE--?
THEN WHY... DO I FEEL DESERTED?
"WHY DO I FEEL... AS THOUGH I'VE BEEN BETRAYED?"
MAYBE MY SENSES ARE A BIT FOGGY--
--BUT I'VE NEVER LET THAT HOLD ME BACK BEFORE.
AFTER ALL-- WHAT OTHER BLIND MAN CAN DO WHAT I DO? MAYBE I DON'T REALLY NEED THOSE HYPER--
OKAY, MISTER--
14

--YOU DON'T WANNA STAY DOWN WHEN THE GAS HITS YA--
--MAYBE YOU'LL STAY DOWN--'CAUSE'A THIS!
:UHHHHH!:
THAT ONE CAUGHT ME HARD-- CAN'T CLEAR MY HEAD--!
BLAST IT, WHAT'S IN THAT GAS--? WHY CAN'T I THINK STRAIGHT--?
THOK
THEY'RE HURTING HIM, MISTER FISWELL.
WE CAN'T DO ANY-THING, REGINA.
...THEY TOLD US TO STAY HERE.
SHOULDN'T WE DO SOMETHING... TO STOP THEM, I MEAN?
YES...WE HAVE TO STAY HERE. THAT'S WHAT THEY SAID.
THEY WANT US...TO STAY HERE.
THOSE PEOPLE... WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEM?
...DRUGGED? IS THAT IT... THAT GAS... DRUGGED?
MUST BE... CAN'T THINK...
...IT MUST BE THE GAS, BLURRING MY SENSES...!
WAIT...THAT SOUND, AND THE VOICES...!
IT'S THE BOSS. HE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO.
RADAR SENSE: LOOK ONCE AGAIN THROUGH THE EYES OF A MAN WHO LIVES IN DARKNESS--
"SEE" AS HE SEES--A DIM, TWILIGHT WORLD OF SHADOWS AND SHAPES--
THAT NOISE... AT THE WINDOW. SOMETHING MOVING THERE...
--A WORLD HE "SEES" ONLY IN HIS MIND--A WORLD NOW TOO CON-FUSED TO MAKE SENSE--!
15


SO.
APPARENTLY, MY GAMBIT SUCCEEDED. I'M QUITE GLAD YOU DECIDED TO JOIN US HERE, DARE-DEVIL...
IT'LL MAKE THIS TOWN... LESS LONELY.
...FOR A TIME, AT ANY RATE.
AND IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE ME, MY FRIEND...*
...THE NAME IS KILLGRAVE... KILLGRAVE, THE PURPLE MAN!
*AS, OF COURSE, WE DO FROM DD #4...RIGHT?... STERN STAN.

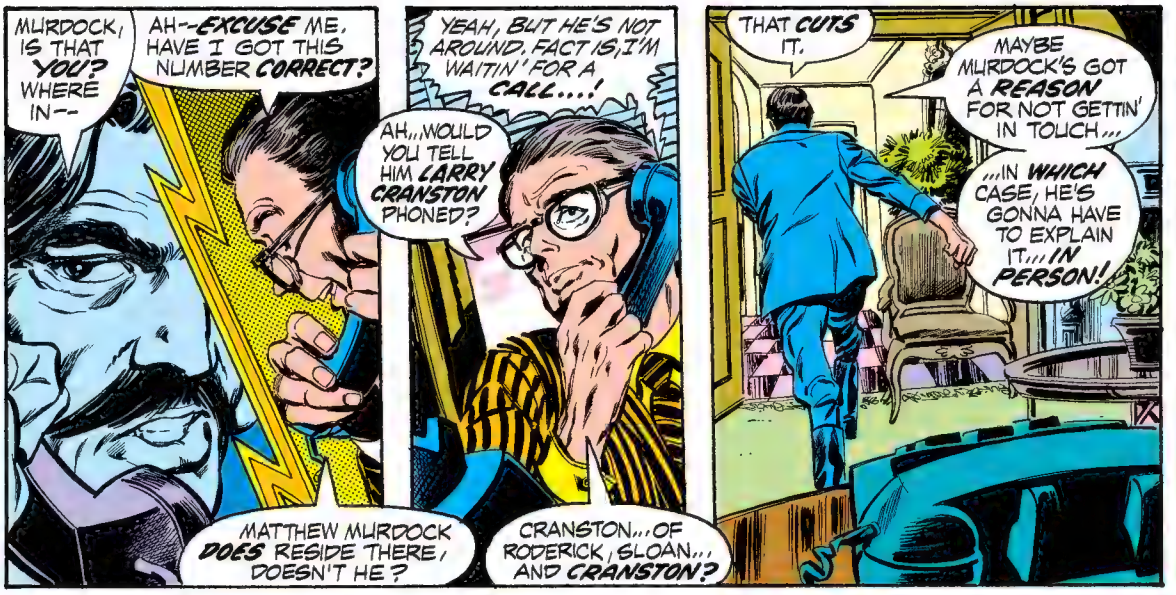
YOU! THEN THAT EXPLAINS IT...
SOMEHOW...THAT GAS WORKS IN THE SAME WAY YOUR BODY DOES!
PRECISELY... BUT ONLY I CAN ADD THE EQUISITE TOUCH OF GRANDEUR!

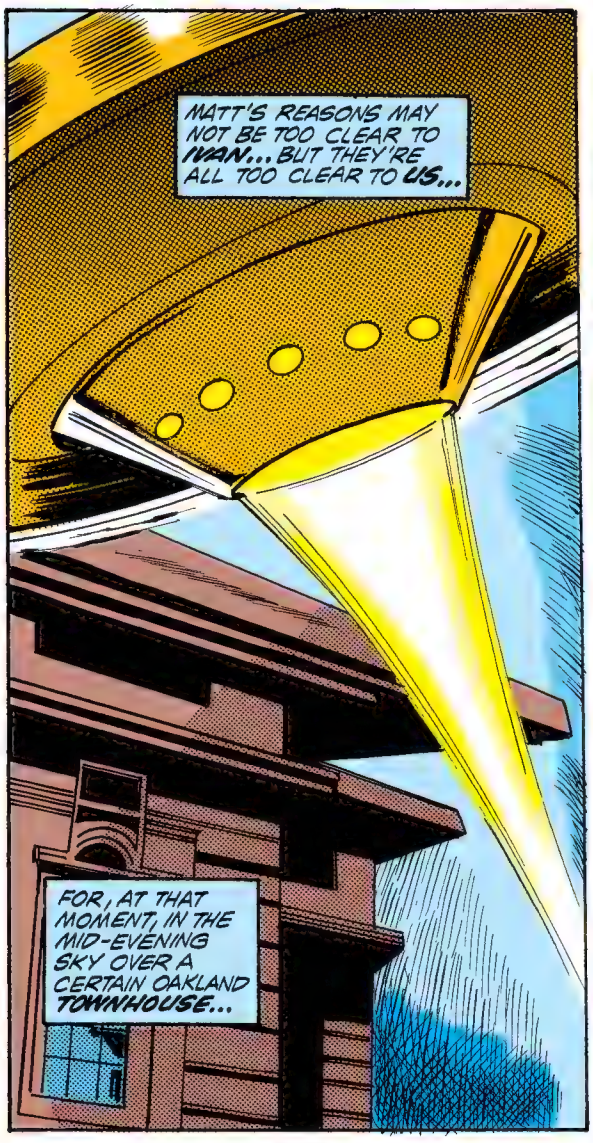

YOU PEOPLE! ATTACK HIM! ATTAAAACK!
RELEASED, HE WHIRLS--AND EVEN AS HE THROWS UP HIS ARMS TO PROTECT HIMSELF--HE KNOWS IT'S A BATTLE HE'S DESTINED TO LOSE--!


NOW, TO DOWN-TOWN 'FRISCO...
BLUE CIRCLE
...AND THE QUIET, WARY FORM OF MADAME NATASHA...

...AS SHE ENTERS A SMOKEY, ILL-LIT NIGHTCLUB, FOLLOWING THE LAST OF A SERIES OF WELL-PLACED LEADS...
IT'S HIM...
...DANNY FRENCH!

--THEN WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, MISTER FRENCH?
THERE WILL BE NO MISTAKES?
NONE, MISTER FREDRICKS.
BELIEVE ME,,, YOU CAN COUNT ON DANNY BOY.
TASHA!
WHO IS THIS YOUNG WOMAN, MR, FRENCH?
AND CAN I COUNT ON DANNY BOY, TOO, OLD FRIEND?
AS SHE SAID,,, AN OLD FRIEND.
THEN, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME,,,
I'LL LEAVE YOU YOUNG PEOPLE ALONE.
WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME ARE YOU DOING HERE, NATASHA?
WERE YOU THE ONE WHO...?
...THIS MORNING? YES, IVAN TOLD ME YOU'D CALLED...I TRIED TO FIND YOU...!
STILL WORRIED ABOUT PROJECT FOUR, HMM?
BUT I--! ALL RIGHT, DANNY.
COME ON, LET'S FIND A PLACE WHERE WE CAN TALK.
I GUESS THERE ARE THINGS WE'D BETTER SETTLE NOW... ONCE AND FOR ALL!
WAITING: THE HOURS WHICH PASS MORE SLOWLY THAN THEY'VE EVER PASSED BEFORE... UNTIL THE THIN LINE OF PATIENCE IS MET,,, AND CROSSED...!
FEEL LIKE I'VE PUT DOWN ROOTS... WHAT'S WRONG WITH MURDOCK? WHY HASN'T HE CALLED?
IF HE LETS SOMETHING HAPPEN TO LITTLE TASHA--!
THE PHONE!
RRINNG
THAT'S GOTTA BE MATT!


MURDOCK, IS THAT YOU? WHERE IN--
AH--EXCUSE ME, HAVE I GOT THIS NUMBER CORRECT?
MATTHEW MURDOCK DOES RESIDE THERE, DOESN'T HE?
YEAH, BUT HE'S NOT AROUND. FACT IS, I'M WAITIN' FOR A CALL...!
AH,,,WOULD YOU TELL HIM LARRY CRANSTON PHONED?
CRANSTON,,,OF RODERICK, SLOAN,,, AND CRANSTON?
THAT CUTS IT.
MAYBE MURDOCK'S GOT A REASON FOR NOT GETTIN' IN TOUCH,,,
,,,IN WHICH CASE, HE'S GONNA HAVE TO EXPLAIN IT,,,IN PERSON!

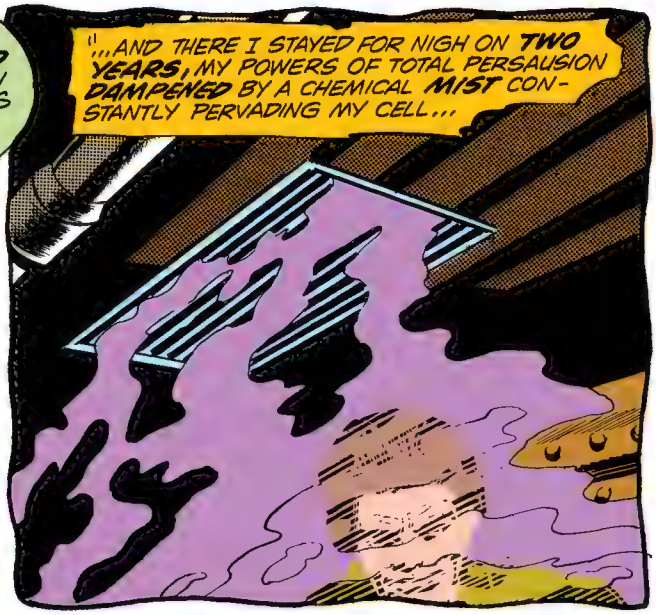

MATT'S REASONS MAY NOT BE TOO CLEAR TO IVAN... BUT THEY'RE ALL TOO CLEAR TO US...
FOR, AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE MID-EVENING SKY OVER A CERTAIN OAKLAND TOWNHOUSE...

THOSE OFFICE-FOLKS SURE DID A JOB ON FANCY-PANTS HERE,
SHADDUP, BERNIE.
WHEN THOSE STRAIGHTS GET THEIR HAIR UP--THERE'S NO STOPPIN' THEM, IS THERE?
I'M AFRAID OUR LOQUACIOUS FRIEND BERNARD HAS A POINT, CHICO.
IT WAS ALL I COULD DO TO KEEP THOSE PEOPLE FROM TEARING DAREDEVIL TO RIBBONS ONCE I ORDERED THEM TO ATTACK!
PERHAPS MY POWERS OF TOTAL COMMAND HAVE GROWN IN THESE INTERVENING YEARS...
,,,OR PERHAPS PEOPLE HAVE GROWN SUBCONSCIOUSLY MORE VICIOUS!

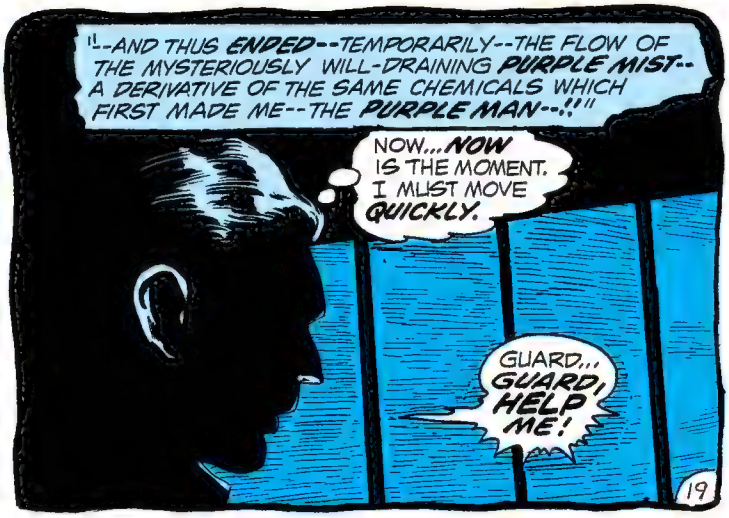
AT ANY RATE, IT SCARCELY MATTERS.
COME, MY FRIEND... AWAKE. WE'VE THINGS TO DISCUSS.
NO ONE BUT, LUCY. BE QUIET, DARLING-- HE'S COMING AROUND!
KILLY... IS THAT THAT DAREDEVIL FELLA?

...KILLGRAVE...YOU? BUT HOW...?
I SEE I'VE AROUSED YOUR CURIOSITY, DAREDEVIL. GOOD ENOUGH...

...I SUPPOSE I DO OWE YOU AN EXPLANATION, AT THAT.
YOU SEE, MY FRIEND-- AFTER YOU CAPTURED ME THAT DAY SO MANY MONTHS AGO,* I WAS CONSIGNED TO A SPECIALLY-DESIGNED PRISON...
*DD #4...STUDIOUS STAN.


"...AND THERE I STAYED FOR NIGH ON TWO YEARS, MY POWERS OF TOTAL PERSUASION DAMPENED BY A CHEMICAL MIST CONSTANTLY PERVADING MY CELL...

--ONE THAT DESTROYED THE TURBINES IN THE CONTROL TOWER--

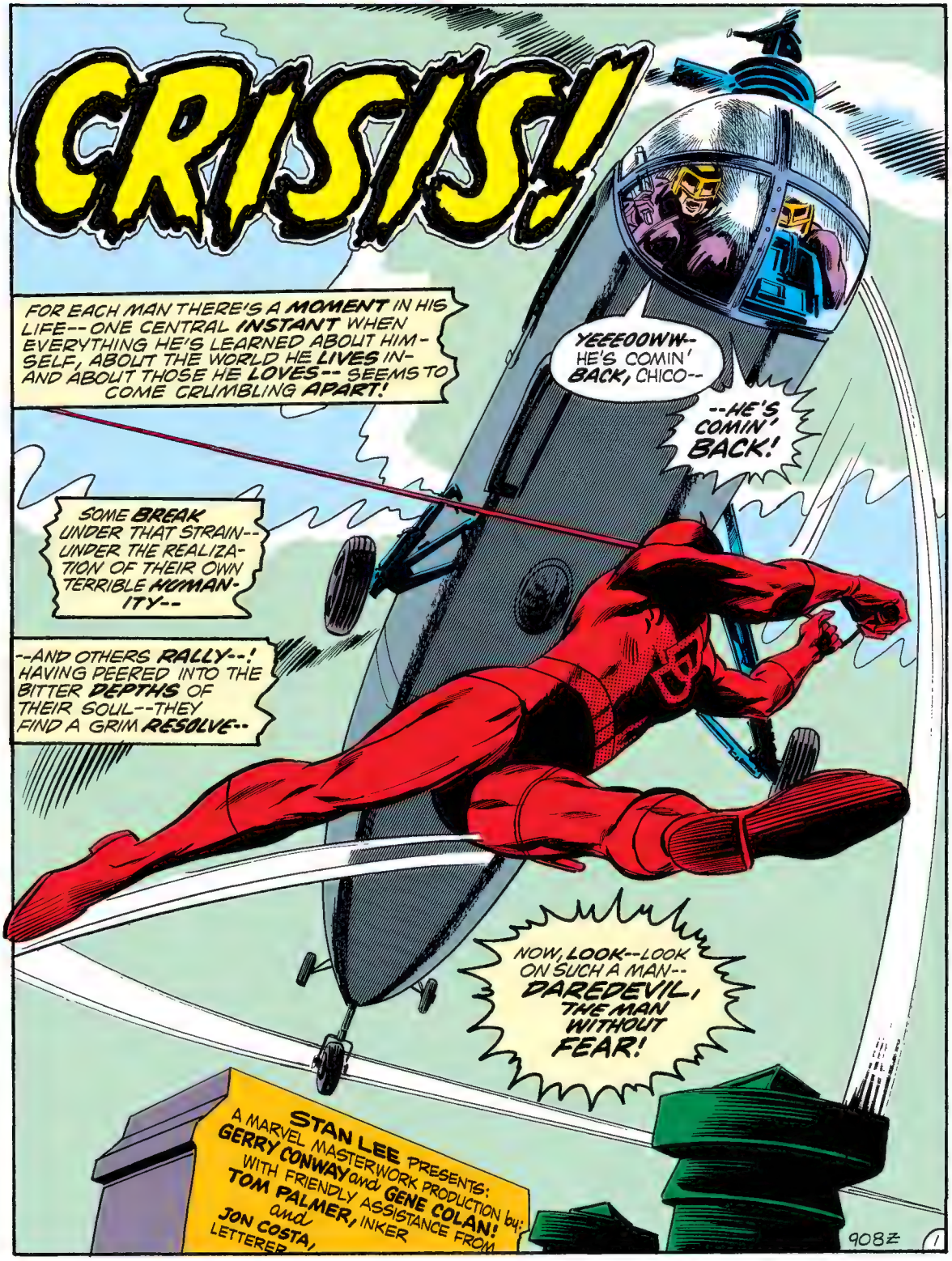

"--AND THUS ENDED--TEMPORARILY--THE FLOW OF THE MYSTERIOUSLY WILL-DRAINING PURPLE MIST-- A DERIVATIVE OF THE SAME CHEMICALS WHICH FIRST MADE ME--THE PURPLE MAN--!!"
NOW...NOW IS THE MOMENT. I MUST MOVE QUICKLY.
GUARD... GUARD! HELP ME!

"A SMALL TOUCH OF MY IRRESISTABLE WILL FORCED HIM TO RELEASE ME--
"--AND SINCE THAT TIME, I HAVE LIVED HERE, IN SAN FRANCISCO.
"--IN THE INTERVENING YEARS, I'VE DEVELOPED QUITE AN EMPIRE--UNKNOWN TO ALL BUT THOSE DIRECTLY IN CONTACT WITH THE MAN CALLED--KILLGRAVE."
SUDDENLY, AS KILLGRAVE COMPLETES HIS TALE--
BOSS, HEY, BOSSSUUUUHHH--
--THE DOOR!
LUNGING THROUGH THE SHATTERED DOORFRAME, HURLING A GLISTENING BLACK TEAR-GAS GRENADE--
--A MOST UNEXPECTED SAVIOR--
IVAN!
YOU'VE GOT IT, DD!
MY EYES--BLAST IT, I CAN'T SEE!
I'M WITH YOU, OLD FRIEND--!
NOW HOW ABOUT CHURNIN' THOSE LEGS--BEFORE THAT GAS WEARS OFF, AND BUSTER HERE GETS HIMSELF SOME UNHEALTHY IDEAS!
GREAT. WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR ANY MORE SUPER-ANTICS, HERO MAN.
I FIGURED YOU MUSTA BEEN IN SOME SORT OF TROUBLE WHEN I TRACED YOUR HOMING SIGNAL TO THIS TOWN-HOUSE--
--BUT WHATEVER'S GOING ON HERE CAN'T BE NOTHING COMPARED TO WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH NATASHA!
I...I KNOW WHY YOU'RE SAYING THAT, IVAN...
...BUT BELIEVE ME... YOU'RE WRONG... DEAD WRONG!

YEH? TELL ME ABOUT IT SOMETIME, D'D.
MEANTIME--I'LL MAKE THE DECISIONS TILL YOU'RE FEELING MORE LIKE YOURSELF--
--AND DECISION ONE MEANS COPPING THIS HOVER-CRAFT--
--WITH OR WITHOUT SHORTIE'S PER-MISSION!
WITH LUCK THIS THING'LL HANDLE LIKE THE JOBBERS I HANDLED BACK IN RUSSIA.
CLIMB ABOARD, DD!
IVAN, YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE.
KILLGRAVE'S DANGEROUS...LORD KNOWS HOW DANGEROUS!
I'M CRYING ABOUT IT, MURDOCK.
JUST SHUT UP AND LET ME DRIVE THIS THING, WILL YA?
SURE. WHY NOT? I'M JUST A LOAD OF DEAD WEIGHT, ANYWAY...
WHAT KINDA BUNK TALK IS THAT, MASKED MAN?
IT'S THE TRUTH, IVAN. I MIGHT AS WELL FACE IT...
FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE VERY FIRST TIME... I FAILED BACK THERE.
YOU UNDER-STAND THAT, IVE? THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR... BLEW IT!
EYEBROW RAISED, IVAN STARES BACK AT THE MOROSE MATT MURDOCK, ONLY NOW REALIZING THAT PERHAPS HE HAS MADE AN ERROR...
PARK
ENTER
...BUT THEN HIS THOUGHTS TURN ELSEWHERE, TO THE WOMAN KNOWN AS MADAME NATASHA ...AND HE WONDERS, "WHERE IS SHE...WHAT IS SHE DOING?"
FOR IVAN, THE ANSWER IS YET HOURS AWAY... BUT FOR US, THE WIDOW'S ACTIONS ARE MORE THAN VISIBLE...
SHOULDERS BENDING UNDER SOME INCON-CEIVABLE EMOTIONAL WEIGHT, SHE WALKS BESIDE THE MYSTERIOUS DANNY FRENCH... AND FROM TIME TO TIME, HER EYES GLANCE TOWARD HIM...
...AND SHOULD SHE BE SEEN, THE FEAR IN HER GLANCE WOULD BE PAINFULLY PLAIN... AND WOULD BEG THE QUESTION...
WHAT IS PROJECT FOUR?

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
20¢
89
JULY
02459
DAREDEVIL™
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
WHY DON'T YOU JUST LIE DOWN AND DIE, DAREDEVIL?
MAYBE YOU COULD HANDLE ELECTRO-- OR EVEN KILLGRAVE--
--BUT YOU'LL NEVER BEAT US BOTH!!
CRISIS IN THE SKY!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™


CRISIS!
FOR EACH MAN THERE'S A MOMENT IN HIS LIFE--ONE CENTRAL INSTANT WHEN EVERYTHING HE'S LEARNED ABOUT HIMSELF, ABOUT THE WORLD HE LIVES IN--AND ABOUT THOSE HE LOVES--SEEMS TO COME CRUMBLING APART!
YEEEOOWW--HE'S COMIN' BACK, CHICO--
--HE'S COMIN' BACK!
SOME BREAK UNDER THAT STRAIN--UNDER THE REALIZATION OF THEIR OWN TERRIBLE HUMANITY--
--AND OTHERS RALLY--! HAVING PEERED INTO THE BITTER DEPTHS OF THEIR SOUL--THEY FIND A GRIM RESOLVE--
NOW, LOOK--LOOK ON SUCH A MAN--DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
STAN LEE PRESENTS: A MARVEL MASTERWORK PRODUCTION by: GERRY CONWAY and GENE COLAN! WITH FRIENDLY ASSISTANCE FROM TOM PALMER, INKER and JON COSTA, LETTERER
908Z
1

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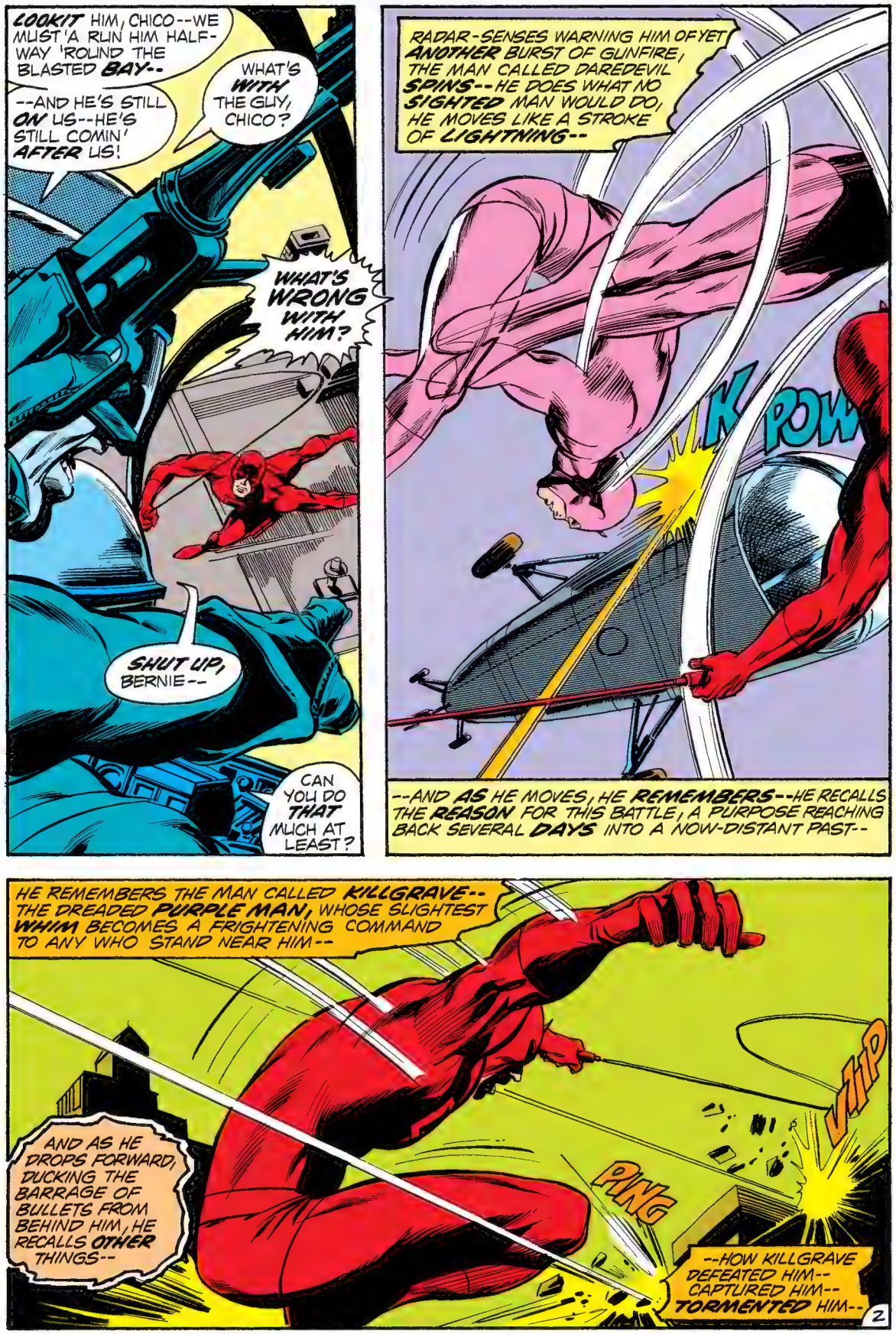
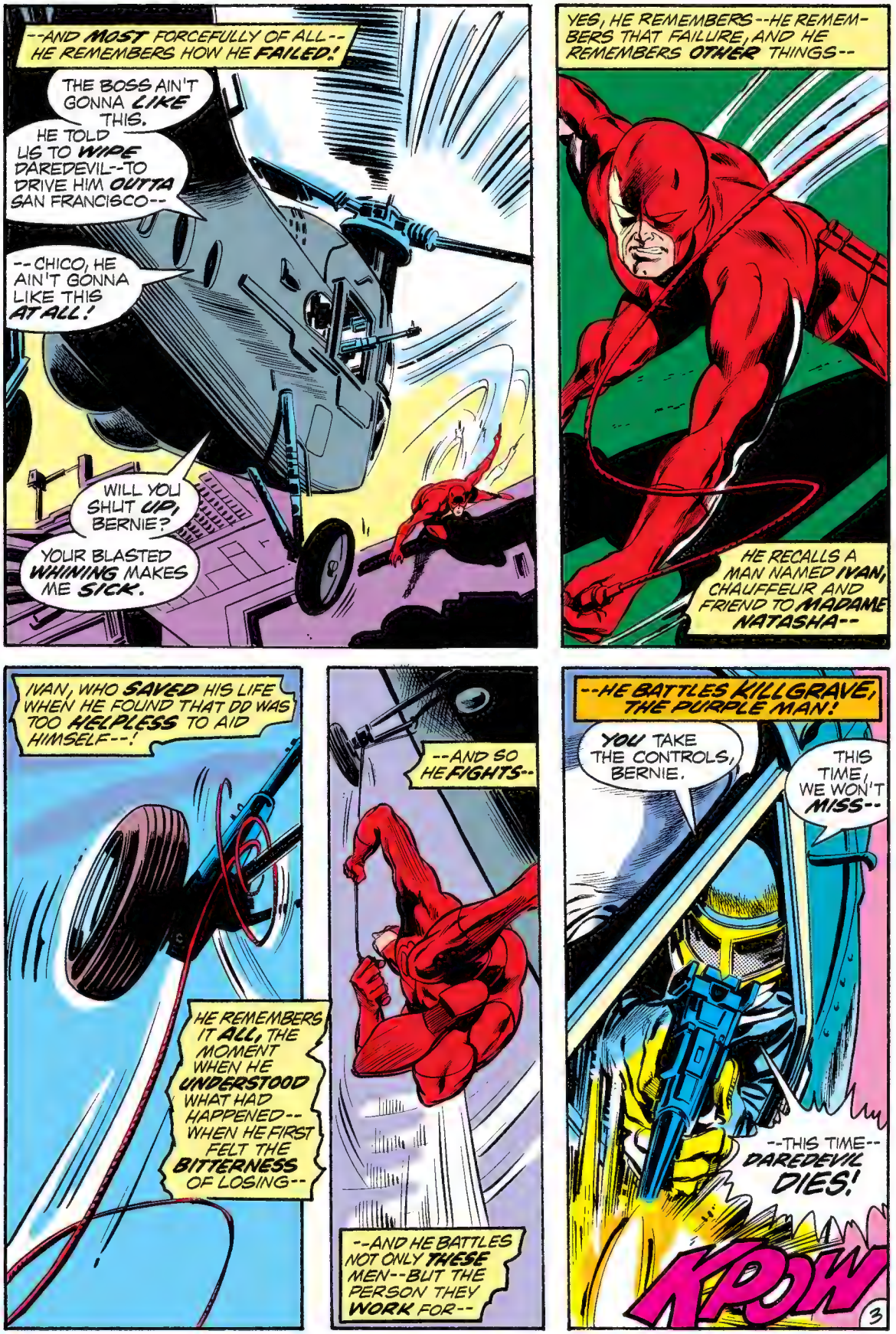
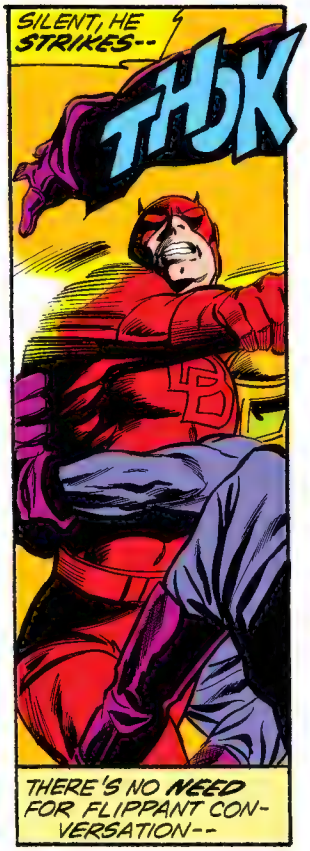
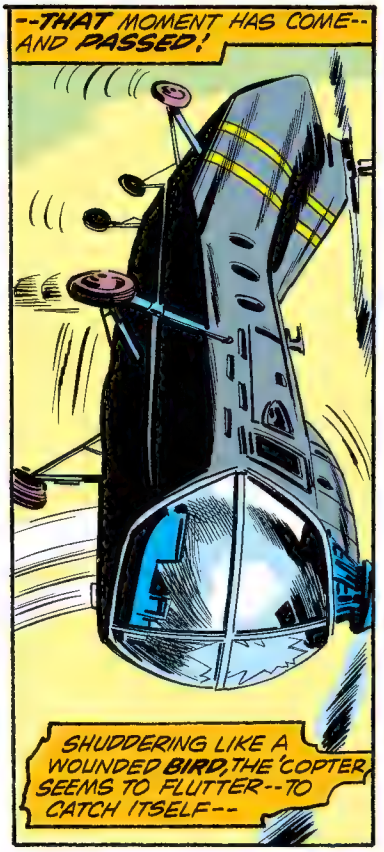
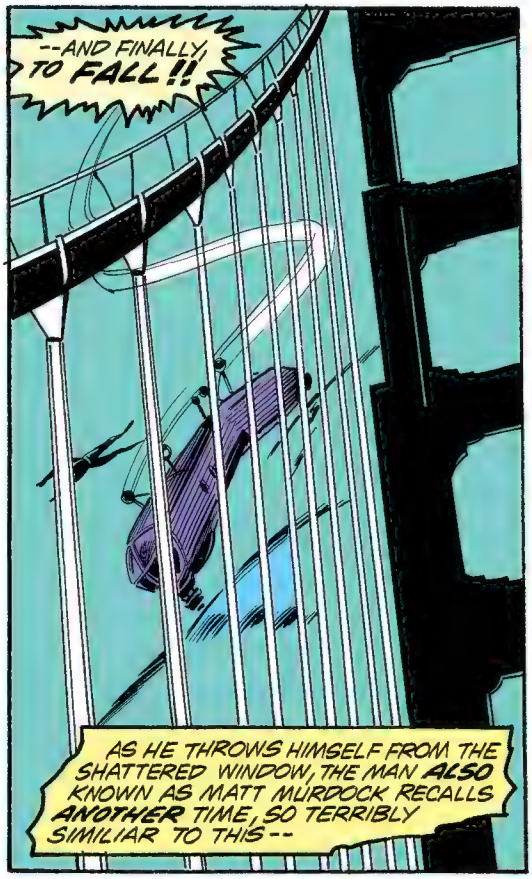

LOOKIT HIM, CHICO--WE MUST'A RUN HIM HALF-WAY 'ROUND THE BLASTED BAY--
--AND HE'S STILL ON US--HE'S STILL COMIN' AFTER US!
WHAT'S WITH THE GUY, CHICO?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?
SHUT UP, BERNIE--
CAN YOU DO THAT MUCH AT LEAST?
RADAR-SENSES WARNING HIM OF YET ANOTHER BURST OF GUNFIRE, THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL SPINS--HE DOES WHAT NO SIGHTED MAN WOULD DO, HE MOVES LIKE A STROKE OF LIGHTNING--
K
POW
--AND AS HE MOVES, HE REMEMBERS--HE RECALLS THE REASON FOR THIS BATTLE, A PURPOSE REACHING BACK SEVERAL DAYS INTO A NOW-DISTANT PAST--
HE REMEMBERS THE MAN CALLED KILLGRAVE--THE DREADED PURPLE MAN, WHOSE SLIGHTEST WHIM BECOMES A FRIGHTENING COMMAND TO ANY WHO STAND NEAR HIM--
AND AS HE DROPS FORWARD, DUCKING THE BARRAGE OF BULLETS FROM BEHIND HIM, HE RECALLS OTHER THINGS--
VZIP
PING
--HOW KILLGRAVE DEFEATED HIM--CAPTURED HIM--TORMENTED HIM--
2

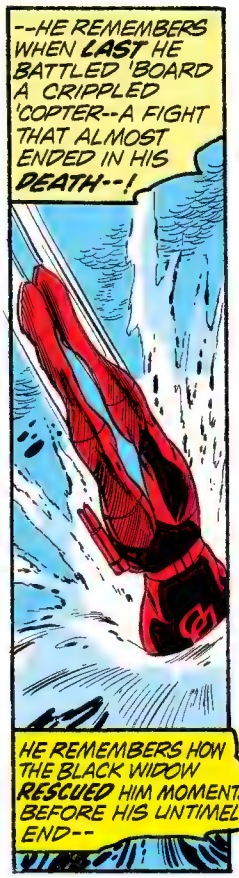

--AND MOST FORCEFULLY OF ALL--HE REMEMBERS HOW HE FAILED!
THE BOSS AIN'T GONNA LIKE THIS.
HE TOLD US TO WIPE DAREDEVIL--TO DRIVE HIM OUTTA SAN FRANCISCO--
--CHICO, HE AIN'T GONNA LIKE THIS AT ALL!
WILL YOU SHUT UP, BERNIE?
YOUR BLASTED WHINING MAKES ME SICK.
YES, HE REMEMBERS--HE REMEMBERS THAT FAILURE, AND HE REMEMBERS OTHER THINGS--
HE RECALLS A MAN NAMED IVAN, CHAUFFEUR AND FRIEND TO MADAME NATASHA--
IVAN, WHO SAVED HIS LIFE WHEN HE FOUND THAT DD WAS TOO HELPLESS TO AID HIMSELF--!
HE REMEMBERS IT ALL, THE MOMENT WHEN HE UNDERSTOOD WHAT HAD HAPPENED--WHEN HE FIRST FELT THE BITTERNESS OF LOSING--
--AND SO HE FIGHTS--
--AND HE BATTLES NOT ONLY THESE MEN--BUT THE PERSON THEY WORK FOR--
--HE BATTLES KILLGRAVE, THE PURPLE MAN!
YOU TAKE THE CONTROLS, BERNIE.
THIS TIME, WE WON'T MISS--
--THIS TIME-- DAREDEVIL DIES!
KPOW
3

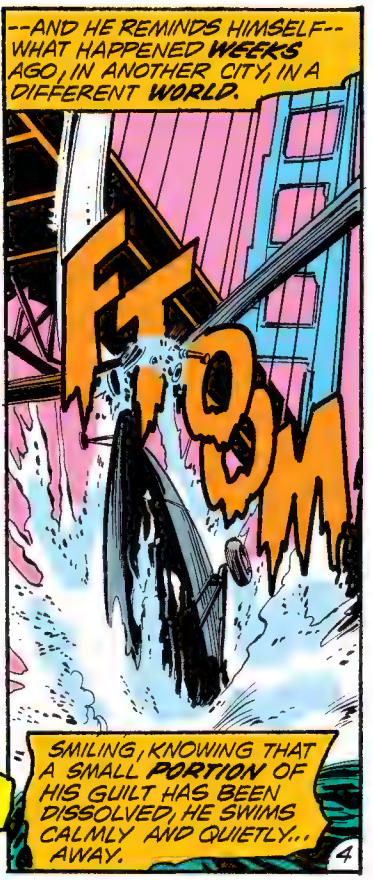
K-RAASH
CHICO--CHICO, THE OTHER WINDOW--
HE'S COMIN' THROUGH THE
:UNNNNNNHHH:

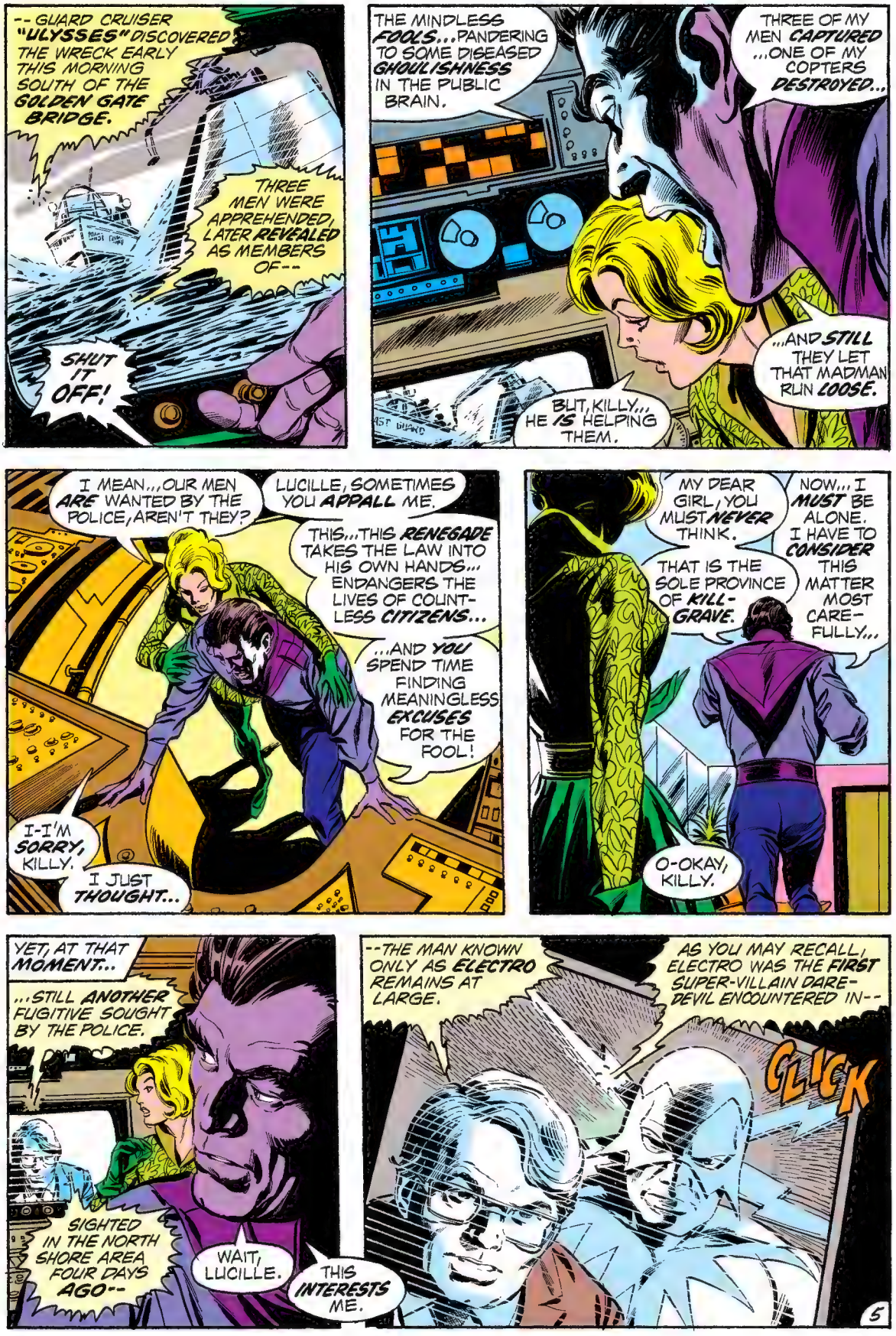

SILENT, HE STRIKES--
THOK
THERE'S NO NEED FOR FLIPPANT CONVERSATION--

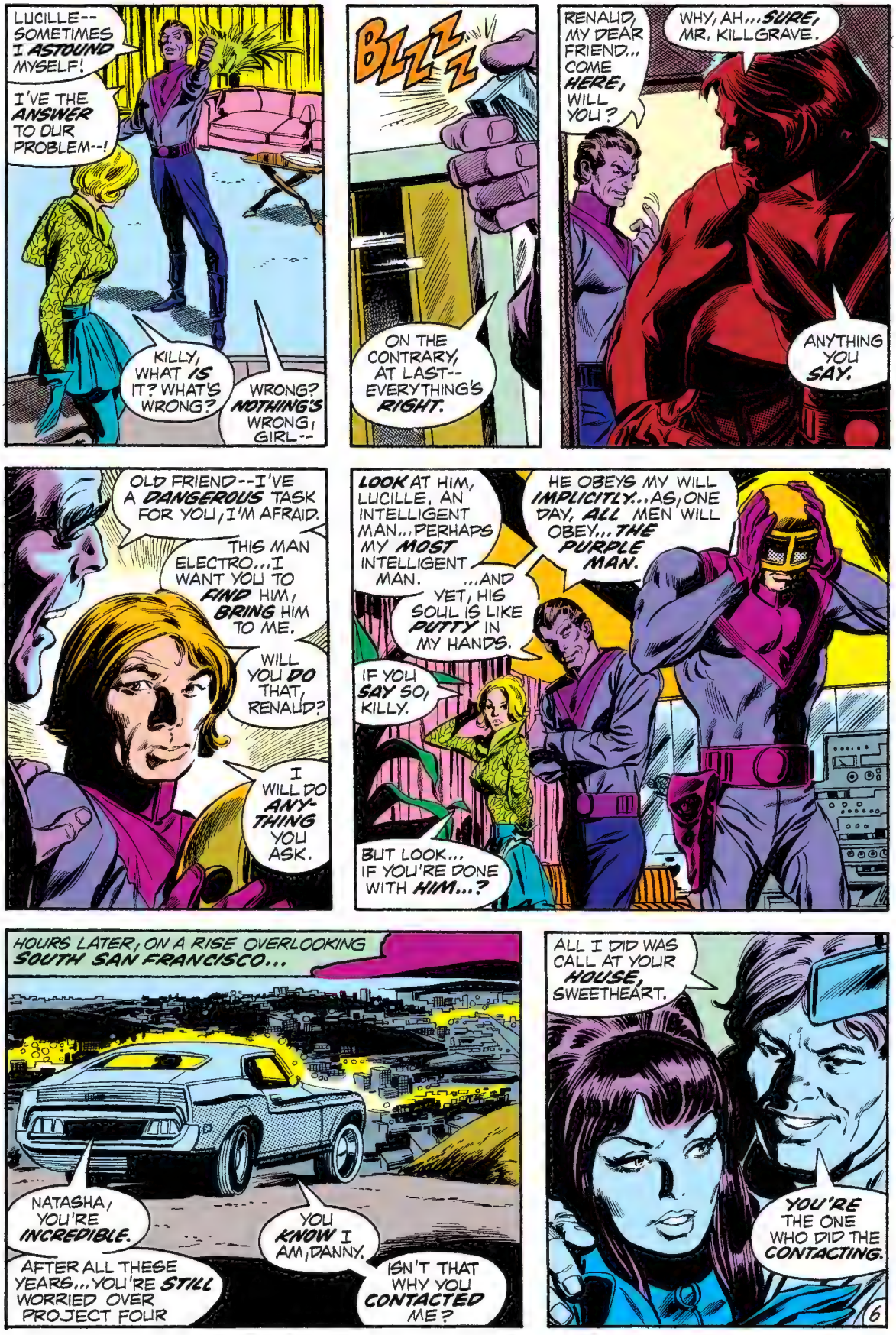

--THAT MOMENT HAS COME--AND PASSED!
SHUDDERING LIKE A WOUNDED BIRD, THE 'COPTER SEEMS TO FLUTTER--TO CATCH ITSELF--


--AND FINALLY, TO FALL!!
AS HE THROWS HIMSELF FROM THE SHATTERED WINDOW, THE MAN ALSO KNOWN AS MATT MURDOCK RECALLS ANOTHER TIME, SO TERRIBLY SIMILIAR TO THIS--

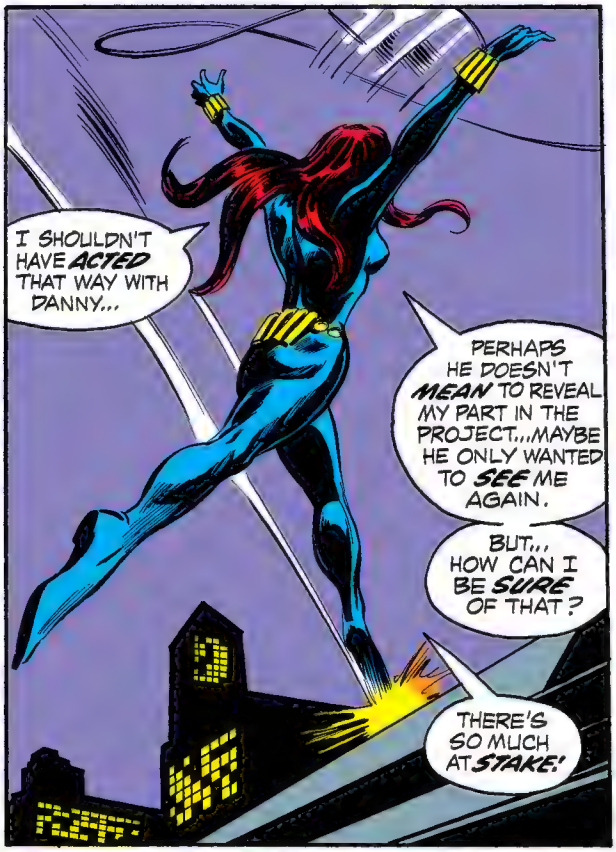

--HE REMEMBERS WHEN LAST HE BATTLED 'BOARD A CRIPPLED 'COPTER--A FIGHT THAT ALMOST ENDED IN HIS DEATH--!
HE REMEMBERS HOW THE BLACK WIDOW RESCUED HIM MOMENTS BEFORE HIS UNTIMELY END--


--AND HE REMINDS HIMSELF--WHAT HAPPENED WEEKS AGO, IN ANOTHER CITY, IN A DIFFERENT WORLD.
FOOM
SMILING, KNOWING THAT A SMALL PORTION OF HIS GUILT HAS BEEN DISSOLVED, HE SWIMS CALMLY AND QUIETLY... AWAY.

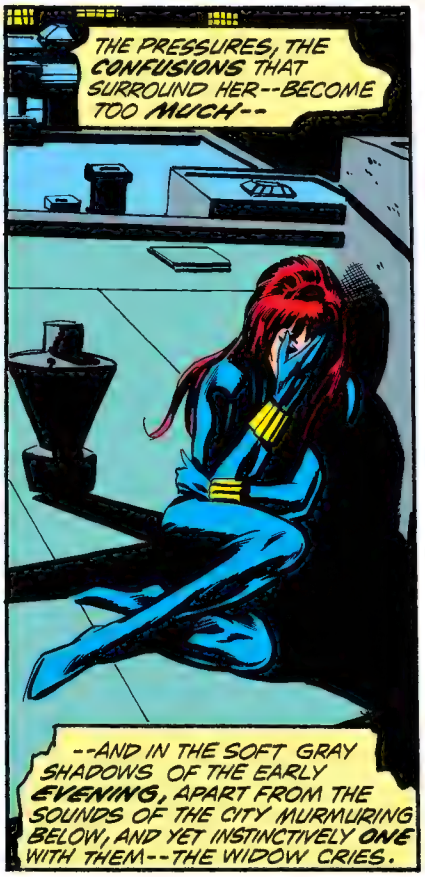

-- GUARD CRUISER "ULYSSES" DISCOVERED THE WRECK EARLY THIS MORNING SOUTH OF THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE.
THREE MEN WERE APPREHENDED, LATER REVEALED AS MEMBERS OF--
SHUT IT OFF!
THE MINDLESS FOOLS... PANDERING TO SOME DISEASED GHOULISHNESS IN THE PUBLIC BRAIN.
THREE OF MY MEN CAPTURED ...ONE OF MY COPTERS DESTROYED...
...AND STILL THEY LET THAT MADMAN RUN LOOSE.
BUT, KILLY,... HE IS HELPING THEM.
I MEAN...OUR MEN ARE WANTED BY THE POLICE, AREN'T THEY?
LUCILLE, SOMETIMES YOU APPALL ME.
THIS...THIS RENEGADE TAKES THE LAW INTO HIS OWN HANDS... ENDANGERS THE LIVES OF COUNTLESS CITIZENS...
...AND YOU SPEND TIME FINDING MEANINGLESS EXCUSES FOR THE FOOL!
I-I'M SORRY, KILLY.
I JUST THOUGHT...
MY DEAR GIRL, YOU MUST NEVER THINK.
THAT IS THE SOLE PROVINCE OF KILL-GRAVE.
NOW... I MUST BE ALONE. I HAVE TO CONSIDER THIS MATTER MOST CAREFULLY...
O-OKAY, KILLY.
YET, AT THAT MOMENT...
...STILL ANOTHER FUGITIVE SOUGHT BY THE POLICE.
SIGHTED IN THE NORTH SHORE AREA FOUR DAYS AGO--
WAIT, LUCILLE.
THIS INTERESTS ME.
--THE MAN KNOWN ONLY AS ELECTRO REMAINS AT LARGE.
AS YOU MAY RECALL, ELECTRO WAS THE FIRST SUPER-VILLAIN DARE-DEVIL ENCOUNTERED IN--
CLICK
5


LUCILLE--SOMETIMES I ASTOUND MYSELF!
I'VE THE ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEM--!
KILLY, WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?
WRONG? NOTHING'S WRONG, GIRL--
BLZZZ
ON THE CONTRARY, AT LAST--EVERYTHING'S RIGHT.
RENAUD, MY DEAR FRIEND... COME HERE, WILL YOU?
WHY, AH...SURE, MR. KILLGRAVE.
ANYTHING YOU SAY.
OLD FRIEND--I'VE A DANGEROUS TASK FOR YOU, I'M AFRAID.
THIS MAN ELECTRO...I WANT YOU TO FIND HIM, BRING HIM TO ME.
WILL YOU DO THAT, RENAUD?
I WILL DO ANY-THING YOU ASK.
LOOK AT HIM, LUCILLE, AN INTELLIGENT MAN...PERHAPS MY MOST INTELLIGENT MAN. ...AND YET, HIS SOUL IS LIKE PUTTY IN MY HANDS.
HE OBEYS MY WILL IMPLICITLY...AS, ONE DAY, ALL MEN WILL OBEY...THE PURPLE MAN.
IF YOU SAY SO, KILLY.
BUT LOOK... IF YOU'RE DONE WITH HIM...?
HOURS LATER, ON A RISE OVERLOOKING SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO...
NATASHA, YOU'RE INCREDIBLE.
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...YOU'RE STILL WORRIED OVER PROJECT FOUR
YOU KNOW I AM, DANNY.
ISN'T THAT WHY YOU CONTACTED ME?
ALL I DID WAS CALL AT YOUR HOUSE, SWEETHEART.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DID THE CONTACTING.
6

DANNY, PLEASE... WE WERE FRIENDS ONCE. THAT DOESN'T MEAN...
DOESN'T IT, NATASHA?
LOOK, IF YOU'RE SO CONCERNED ABOUT PROJECT FOUR...
IF YOU JUST HINTED WHAT I THINK YOU HINTED--
UH-UNH, MISTER FRENCH.
--THIS IS WHERE I GET OFF.
HEY, LOOK, HONEY--I DIDN'T MEAN--!
SAY-- WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
I AGREED TO MEET YOU SO WE COULD TALK, DANNY--
NOT SO YOU COULD PAW OVER ME LIKE SOME EAGER ADOLESCENT.
I'LL BE IN TOUCH, DANNY--
--MAYBE BY THEN YOU'LL HAVE CALMED DOWN!
HER WIDOW'S WEB CATCHING THE SPIRE OF A DISTANT CHURCH, SHE ARCS OUT--AND EVEN AS SHE SWINGS, SHE FEELS HER HEART BEATING--SLAMMING RAPIDLY IN GROWING FEAR--
MATT AND I LEFT NEW YORK TO GET AWAY FROM THIS SORT OF THING--
--FROM THE CONSTANT SUSPICION-- THE GROWING APPREHENSION NEITHER OF US COULD EVER QUITE ABANDON--!
HAVE WE JUST CHANGED LOCALES? WILL THE PERSECUTION START ALL OVER AGAIN-- HERE, IN SAN FRANCISCO?
7


I SHOULDN'T HAVE ACTED THAT WAY WITH DANNY...
PERHAPS HE DOESN'T MEAN TO REVEAL MY PART IN THE PROJECT...MAYBE HE ONLY WANTED TO SEE ME AGAIN.
BUT... HOW CAN I BE SURE OF THAT?
THERE'S SO MUCH AT STAKE!

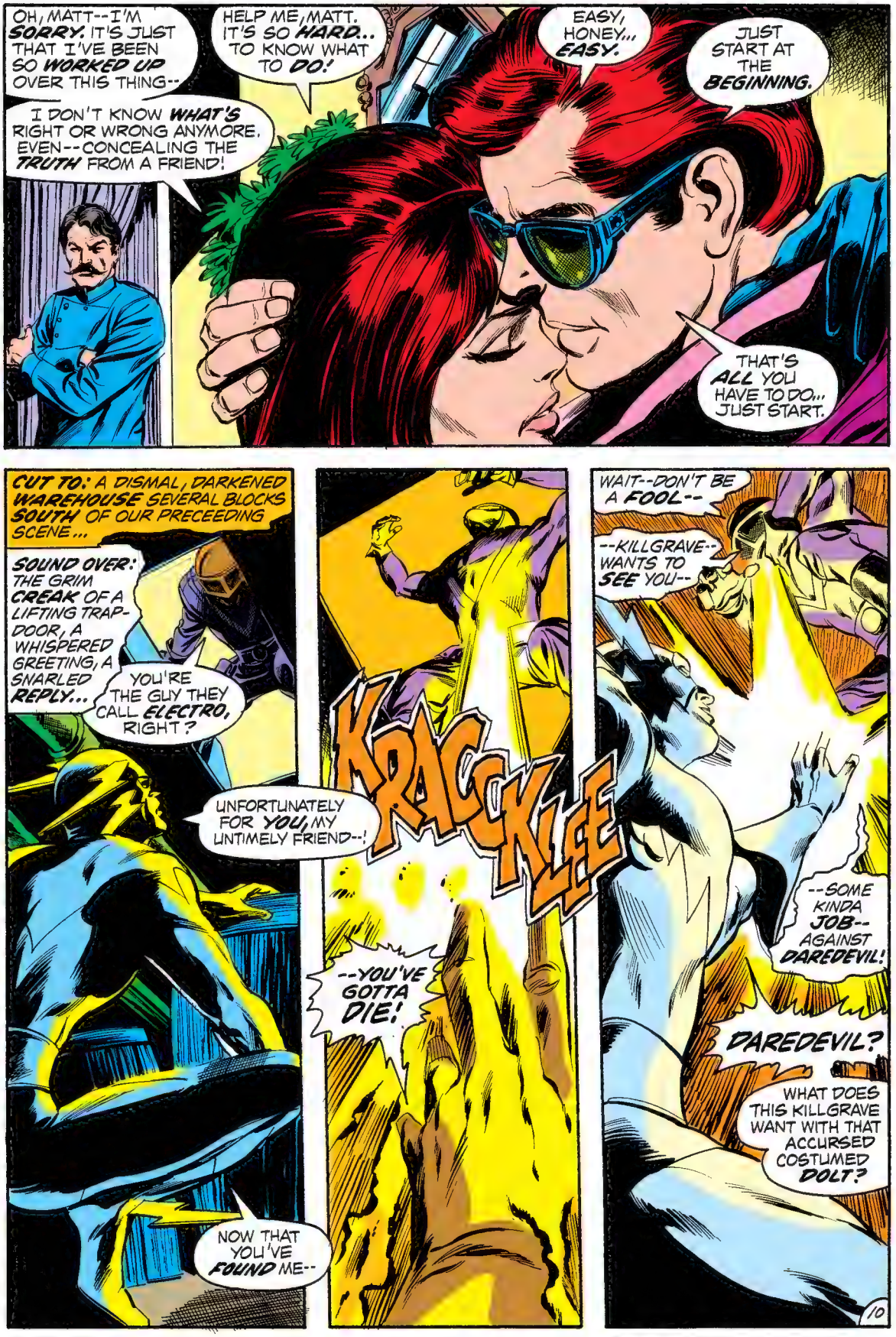
UNBIDDEN, THE IMAGE OF THE MAN SHE LOVES --OR THINKS SHE LOVES--RISES FROM THE DARKNESS OF HER THOUGHTS--
AT FIRST, SHE SMILES-- AND THEN THE SMILE FADES--


THE PRESSURES, THE CONFUSIONS THAT SURROUND HER--BECOME TOO MUCH--
--AND IN THE SOFT GRAY SHADOWS OF THE EARLY EVENING, APART FROM THE SOUNDS OF THE CITY MURMURING BELOW, AND YET INSTINCTIVELY ONE WITH THEM--THE WIDOW CRIES.

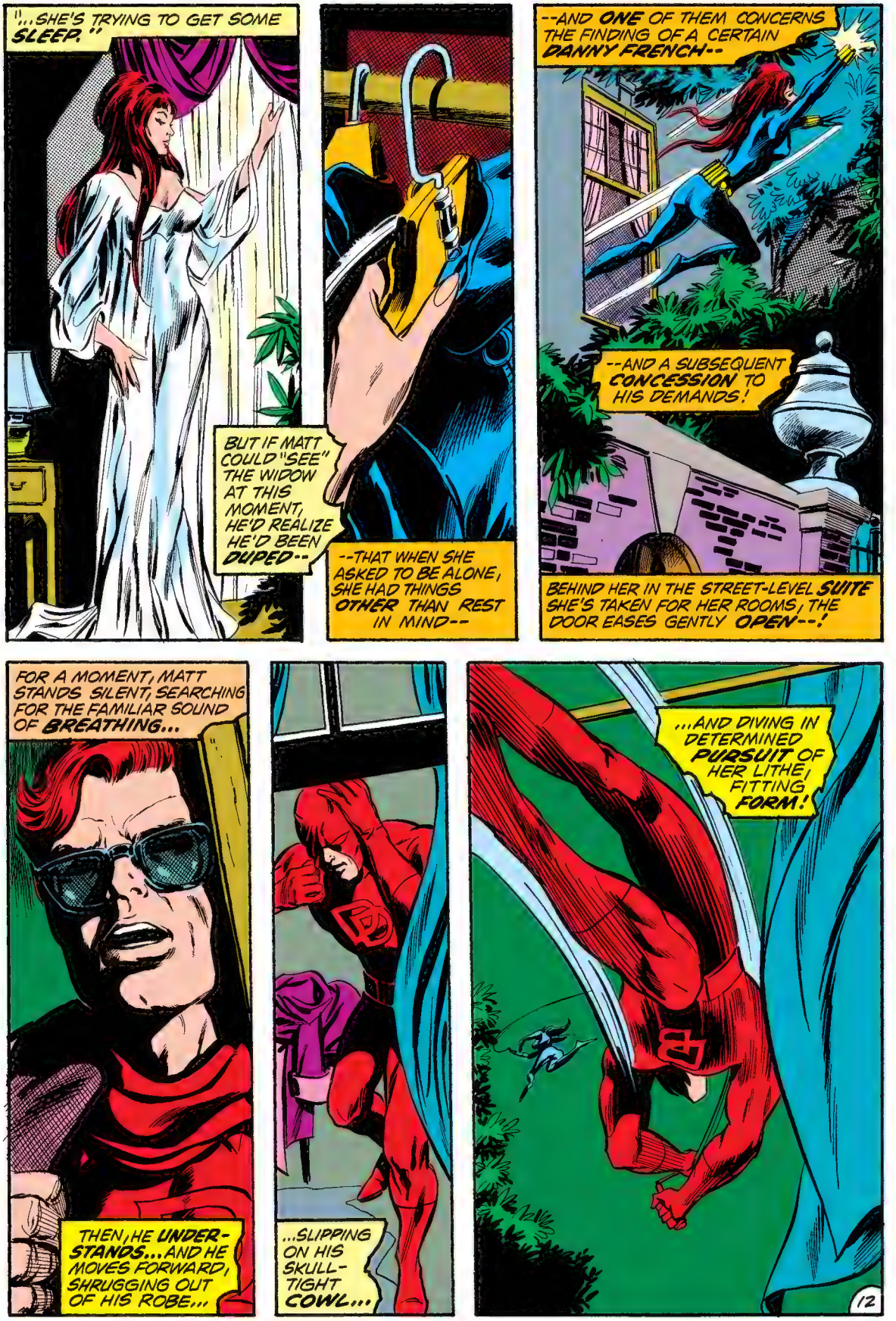
WHILE, IN THE SITTING ROOM OF A CERTAIN POST-BELLUM MANSION OVERLOOKING THE NORTH SHORE...
DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN, MATT.
BUSY DAY...?
MORE OR LESS, IVAN. YOU SAID EARLIER THAT SOMEBODY CALLED?
YEH. SOME GUY NAMED CRANSTON.
SAID FOR YOU TO CALL HIM BACK.

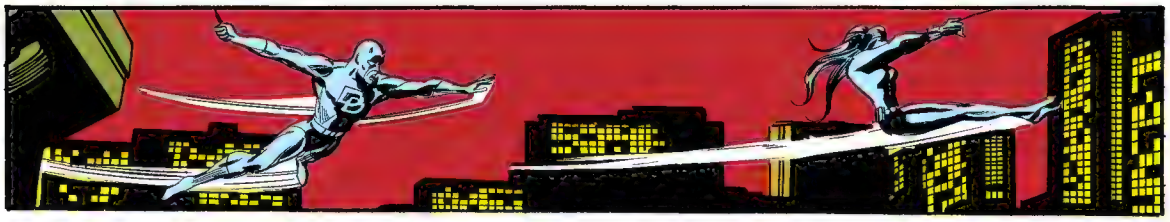
LARRY CRANSTON, HMM? ONE OF THE BETTER CRIMINAL LAWYERS IN THE STATES.
GUESS THAT'S THE MAN,
CAN'T GET OVER THE WAY MURDOCK MOVES...JUST LIKE HE WASN'T BLIND.
THE WAY HE DIALS THAT PHONE ...SENDS CHILLS UP MY SPINE!
8

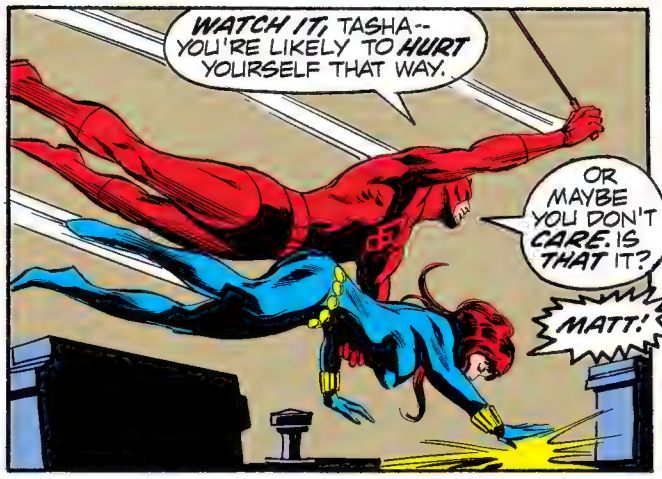
LARRY...? THIS IS MATT. I GATHER NEWS TRAVELS FAST IN SAN FRAN!
HEARD YOU WERE IN TOWN, MY BOY-- THOUGHT I'D SEE WHAT YOUR PLANS WERE.
RIGHT NOW, I'M OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS, LAR.
HAVE ANY?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, MATT--I DO.
--I WAS TALKING TO MY SENIOR PARTNER, FRANK SLOAN-- AND WE THOUGHT WE'D OFFER YOU A POSITION.
...FINE, MATT. THINK ON IT, THEN.
CALL ME FRIDAY WITH YOUR ANSWER.
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
BUT...THERE ARE OTHER THINGS I'VE GOT TO CLEAR UP FIRST.
SLAM
...AND HERE'S ONE OF THEM NOW.
CLICK
TASHA? IS THAT YOU?
YES, MATT. I'VE BEEN... OUT.
COULD WE TALK LATER? I'M... RATHER TIRED.
LITTLE LADY, WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT NOW.
FOR THE PAST FOUR DAYS YOU'VE BEEN ACTING LIKE A HAUNT--
--AND HONEY, I'M--
BLAST IT, WIDOW-- I'M TALKING TO YOU!
NOT NOW, MATT.
PLEASE... NOT NOW.
MAYBE I AM JUST A BLIND MAN, TASHA...
...BUT IT DOESN'T TAKE A SIGHTED MAN TO TELL YOU'VE BEEN CRYING.

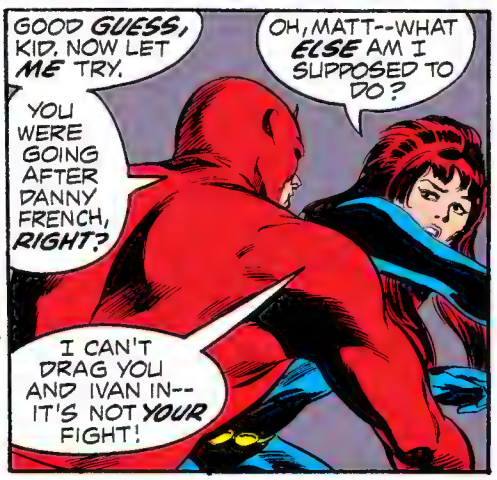

OH, MATT--I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST THAT I'VE BEEN SO WORKED UP OVER THIS THING--
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S RIGHT OR WRONG ANYMORE. EVEN--CONCEALING THE TRUTH FROM A FRIEND!
HELP ME, MATT. IT'S SO HARD.. TO KNOW WHAT TO DO!
EASY, HONEY... EASY.
JUST START AT THE BEGINNING.
THAT'S ALL YOU HAVE TO DO... JUST START.
CUT TO: A DISMAL, DARKENED WAREHOUSE SEVERAL BLOCKS SOUTH OF OUR PRECEEDING SCENE...
SOUND OVER: THE GRIM CREAK OF A LIFTING TRAP-DOOR, A WHISPERED GREETING, A SNARLED REPLY...
YOU'RE THE GUY THEY CALL ELECTRO, RIGHT?
UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, MY UNTIMELY FRIEND--!
NOW THAT YOU'VE FOUND ME--
KRACKLEE
--YOU'VE GOTTA DIE!
WAIT--DON'T BE A FOOL--
--KILLGRAVE-- WANTS TO SEE YOU--
--SOME KINDA JOB-- AGAINST DAREDEVIL!
DAREDEVIL?
WHAT DOES THIS KILLGRAVE WANT WITH THAT ACCURSED COSTUMED DOLT?
10

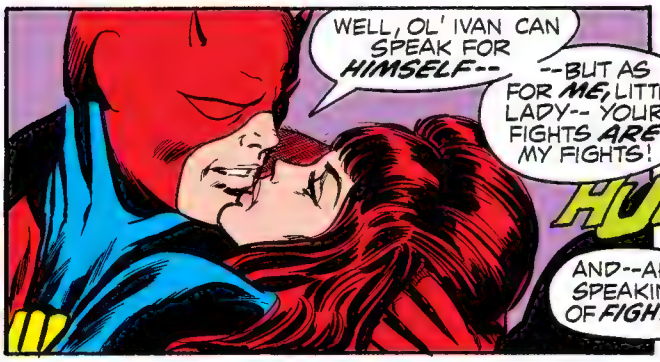
AND AFTER A HURRIED EXPLANATION--
HE WANTS A PACT, EH?
PERHAPS I'LL PROFIT BY SUCH AN ALLIANCE, AT THAT.
TAKE ME TO HIM, FRIEND--AND HURRY--
--'LEST I CHANGE MY MIND.
SOON, AT THE WIDOW'S MANSION...
WELL, MATT? WHAT'D SHE HAVE TO SAY?
SOMETHING ABOUT A PLAN CALLED PROJECT FOUR...!
YEAH? THAT'S PRETTY VAGUE.
LIKE ONE'A THOSE FIFTIES SCI-FI FLICKS. ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT THE GUY CALLED FRENCH?
IVAN, I KNOW HOW THIS IS GOING TO SOUND...
...BUT I'M NOT REALLY SURE I SHOULD TELL YOU.
TASHA'S UPSET... FRIGHTENED.
MAYBE WE'D BETTER JUST LET THE WHOLE THING REST, OKAY?
REST? LISTEN, MURDOCK--I'VE KNOWN HER SINCE SHE WAS A KID.
IF YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY YOU DON'T TRUST ME--
IT'S NOT THAT, IVAN... YOU KNOW IT'S NOT.
...AND BE QUIET, YOU FOOL...
11

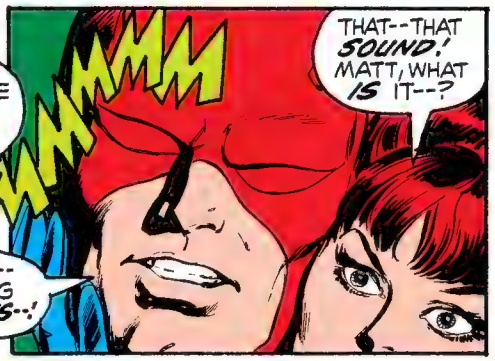

"...SHE'S TRYING TO GET SOME SLEEP."
BUT IF MATT COULD "SEE" THE WIDOW AT THIS MOMENT, HE'D REALIZE HE'D BEEN DUPED--
--THAT WHEN SHE ASKED TO BE ALONE, SHE HAD THINGS OTHER THAN REST IN MIND--
--AND ONE OF THEM CONCERNS THE FINDING OF A CERTAIN DANNY FRENCH--
--AND A SUBSEQUENT CONCESSION TO HIS DEMANDS!
BEHIND HER IN THE STREET-LEVEL SUITE SHE'S TAKEN FOR HER ROOMS, THE DOOR EASES GENTLY OPEN--!
FOR A MOMENT, MATT STANDS SILENT, SEARCHING FOR THE FAMILIAR SOUND OF BREATHING...
THEN, HE UNDER-STANDS... AND HE MOVES FORWARD, SHRUGGING OUT OF HIS ROBE...
...SLIPPING ON HIS SKULL-TIGHT COWL...
...AND DIVING IN DETERMINED PURSUIT OF HER LITHE, FITTING FORM!
12

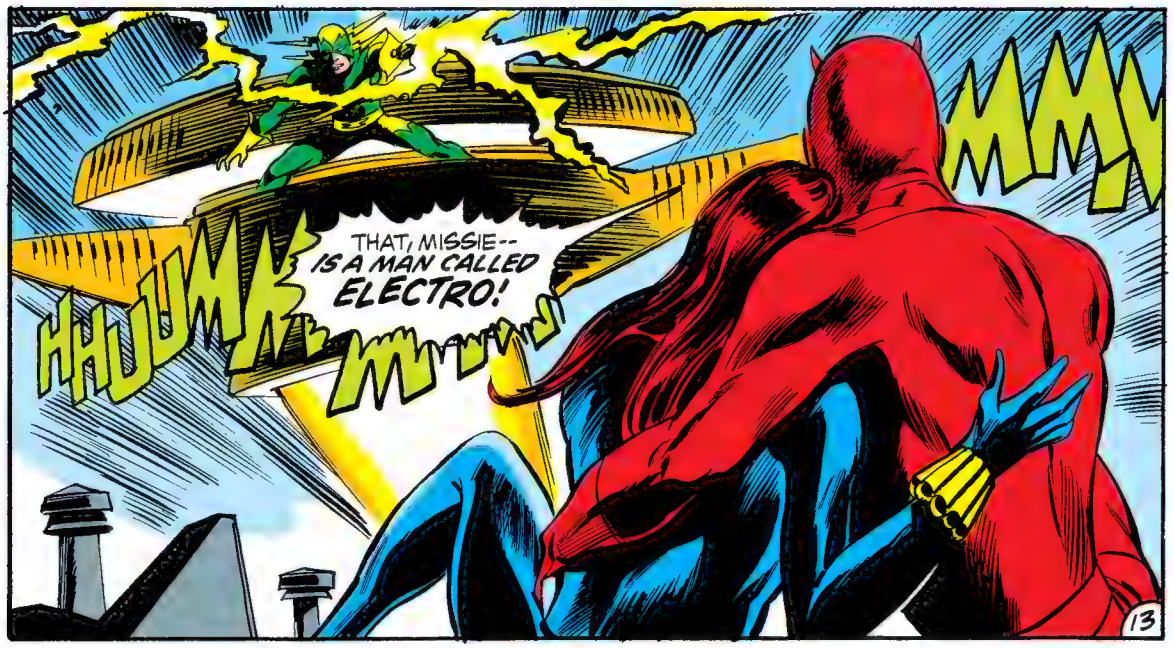


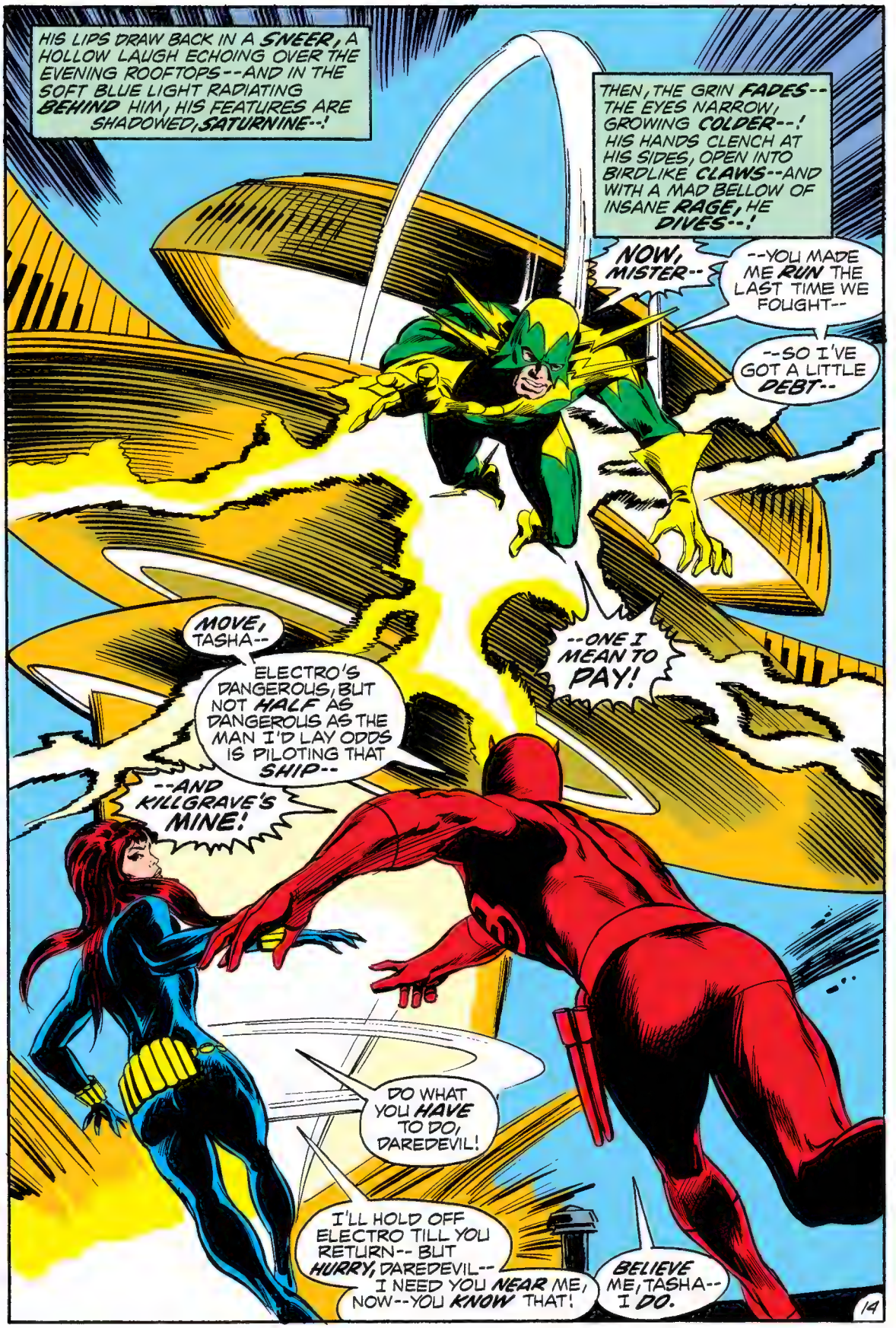

WATCH IT, TASHA-- YOU'RE LIKELY TO HURT YOURSELF THAT WAY.
OR MAYBE YOU DON'T CARE. IS THAT IT?
MATT!

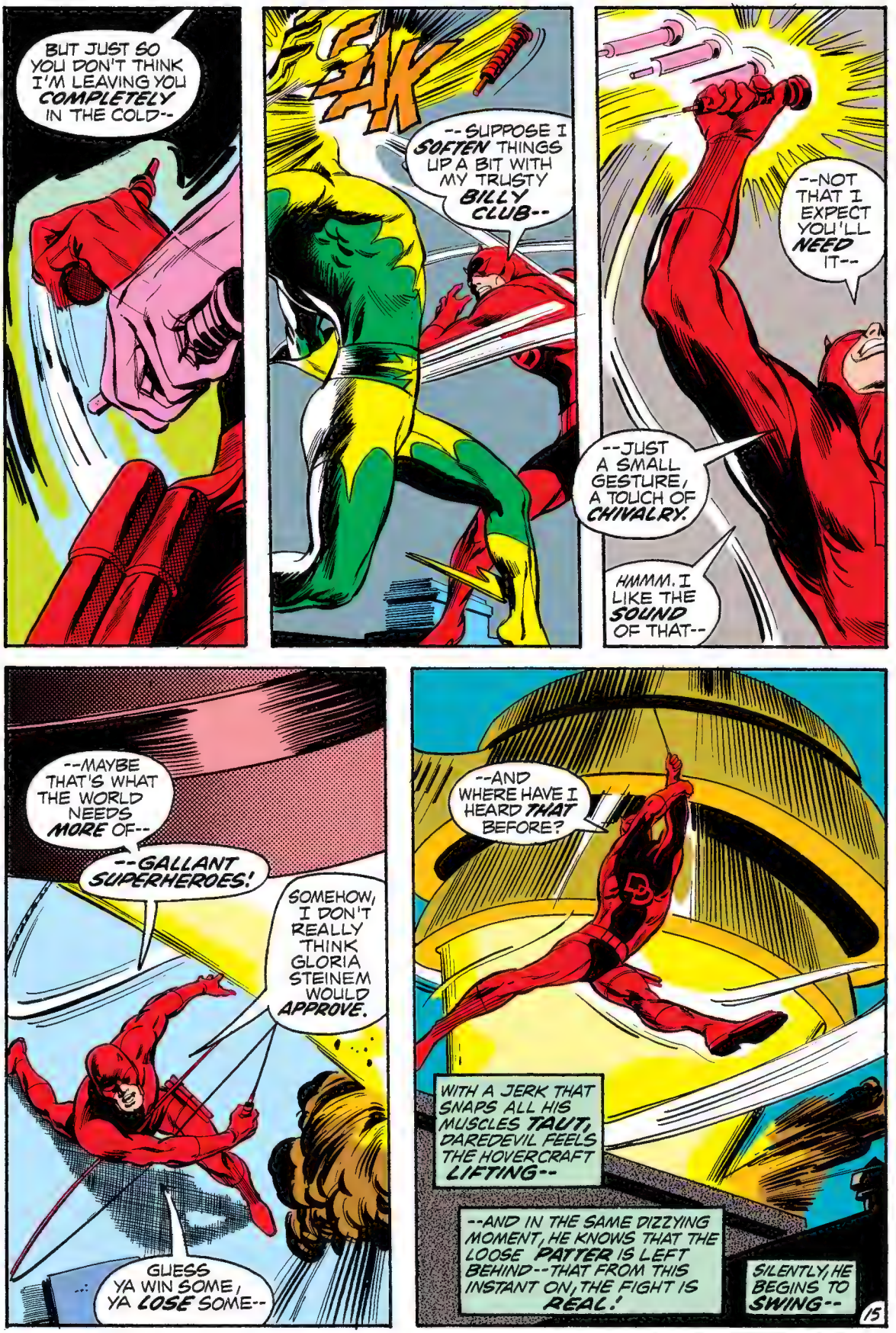

GOOD GUESS, KID. NOW LET ME TRY.
OH, MATT--WHAT ELSE AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
YOU WERE GOING AFTER DANNY FRENCH, RIGHT?
I CAN'T DRAG YOU AND IVAN IN-- IT'S NOT YOUR FIGHT!

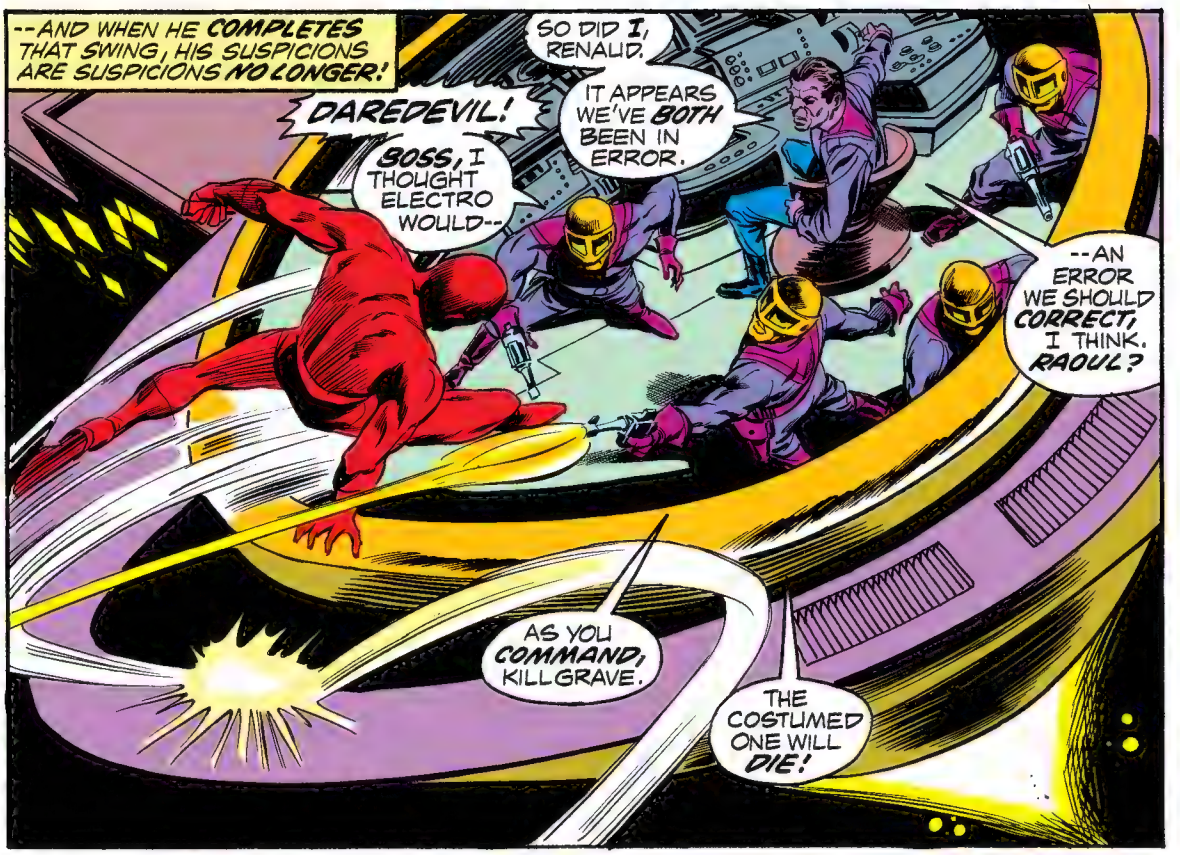

WELL, OL' IVAN CAN SPEAK FOR HIMSELF--
--BUT AS FOR ME, LITTLE LADY-- YOUR FIGHTS ARE MY FIGHTS!
AND--AH-- SPEAKING OF FIGHTS--!

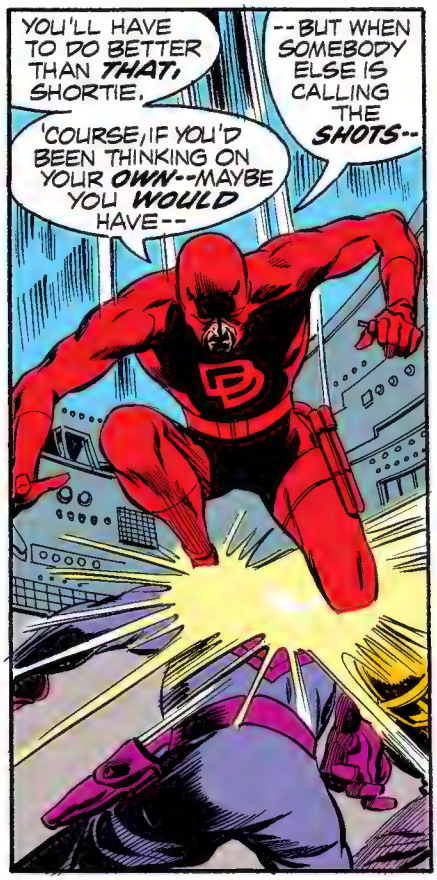

HUMMMMM
THAT--THAT SOUND! MATT, WHAT IS IT--?

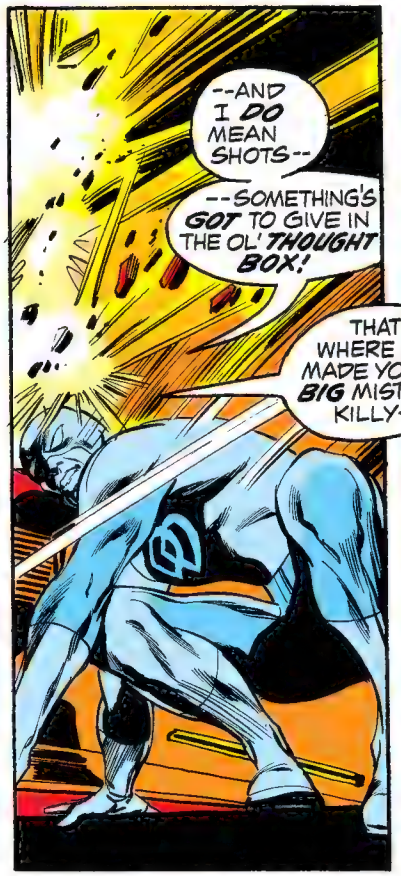

HHUUMM
THAT, MISSIE-- IS A MAN CALLED ELECTRO!
MMM


HIS LIPS DRAW BACK IN A SNEER, A HOLLOW LAUGH ECHOING OVER THE EVENING ROOFTOPS--AND IN THE SOFT BLUE LIGHT RADIATING BEHIND HIM, HIS FEATURES ARE SHADOWED, SATURNINE--!
THEN, THE GRIN FADES--THE EYES NARROW, GROWING COLDER--! HIS HANDS CLENCH AT HIS SIDES, OPEN INTO BIRDLIKE CLAWS--AND WITH A MAD BELLOW OF INSANE RAGE, HE DIVES--!
NOW, MISTER--
--YOU MADE ME RUN THE LAST TIME WE FOUGHT--
--SO I'VE GOT A LITTLE DEBT--
--ONE I MEAN TO PAY!
MOVE, TASHA--
ELECTRO'S DANGEROUS, BUT NOT HALF AS DANGEROUS AS THE MAN I'D LAY ODDS IS PILOTING THAT SHIP--
--AND KILLGRAVE'S MINE!
DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO, DAREDEVIL!
I'LL HOLD OFF ELECTRO TILL YOU RETURN-- BUT HURRY, DAREDEVIL-- I NEED YOU NEAR ME, NOW--YOU KNOW THAT!
BELIEVE ME, TASHA-- I DO.

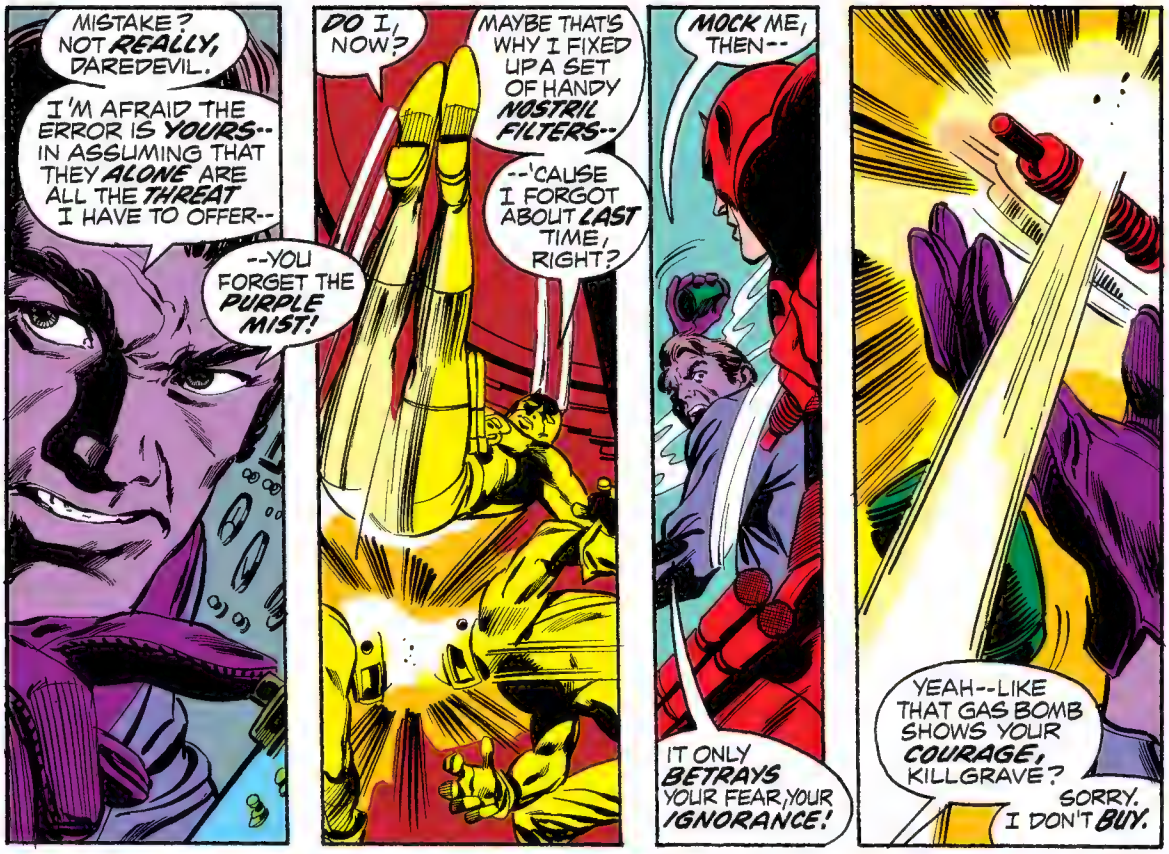

BUT JUST SO YOU DON'T THINK I'M LEAVING YOU COMPLETELY IN THE COLD--
SAK
--SUPPOSE I SOFTEN THINGS UP A BIT WITH MY TRUSTY BILLY CLUB--
--NOT THAT I EXPECT YOU'LL NEED IT--
--JUST A SMALL GESTURE, A TOUCH OF CHIVALRY.
HMMM. I LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT--
--MAYBE THAT'S WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS MORE OF--
--GALLANT SUPERHEROES!
SOMEHOW, I DON'T REALLY THINK GLORIA STEINEM WOULD APPROVE.
GUESS YA WIN SOME, YA LOSE SOME--
--AND WHERE HAVE I HEARD THAT BEFORE?
WITH A JERK THAT SNAPS ALL HIS MUSCLES TAUT, DAREDEVIL FEELS THE HOVERCRAFT LIFTING--
--AND IN THE SAME DIZZYING MOMENT, HE KNOWS THAT THE LOOSE PATTER IS LEFT BEHIND--THAT FROM THIS INSTANT ON, THE FIGHT IS REAL!
SILENTLY, HE BEGINS TO SWING--

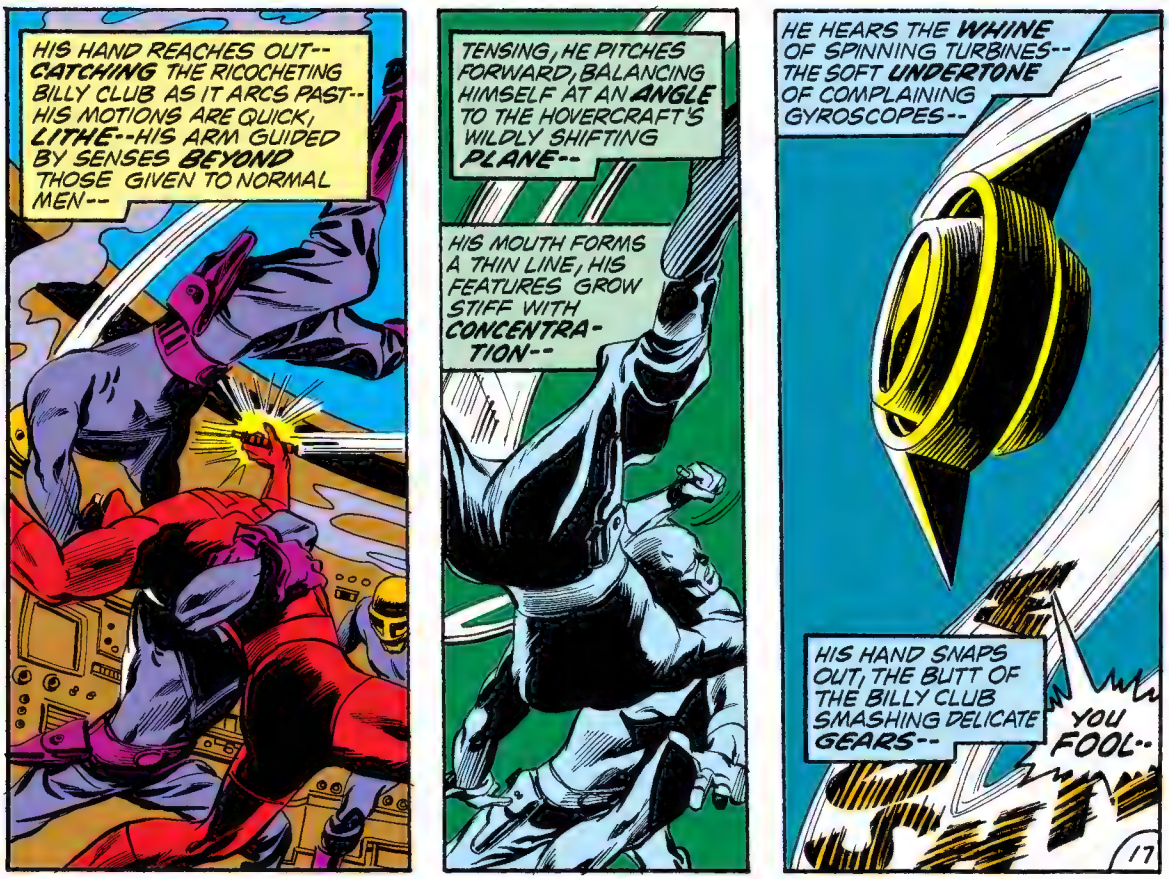

--AND WHEN HE COMPLETES THAT SWING, HIS SUSPICIONS ARE SUSPICIONS NO LONGER!
DAREDEVIL!
BOSS, I THOUGHT ELECTRO WOULD--
SO DID I, RENAUD.
IT APPEARS WE'VE BOTH BEEN IN ERROR.
--AN ERROR WE SHOULD CORRECT, I THINK. RAOUL?
AS YOU COMMAND, KILLGRAVE.
THE COSTUMED ONE WILL DIE!

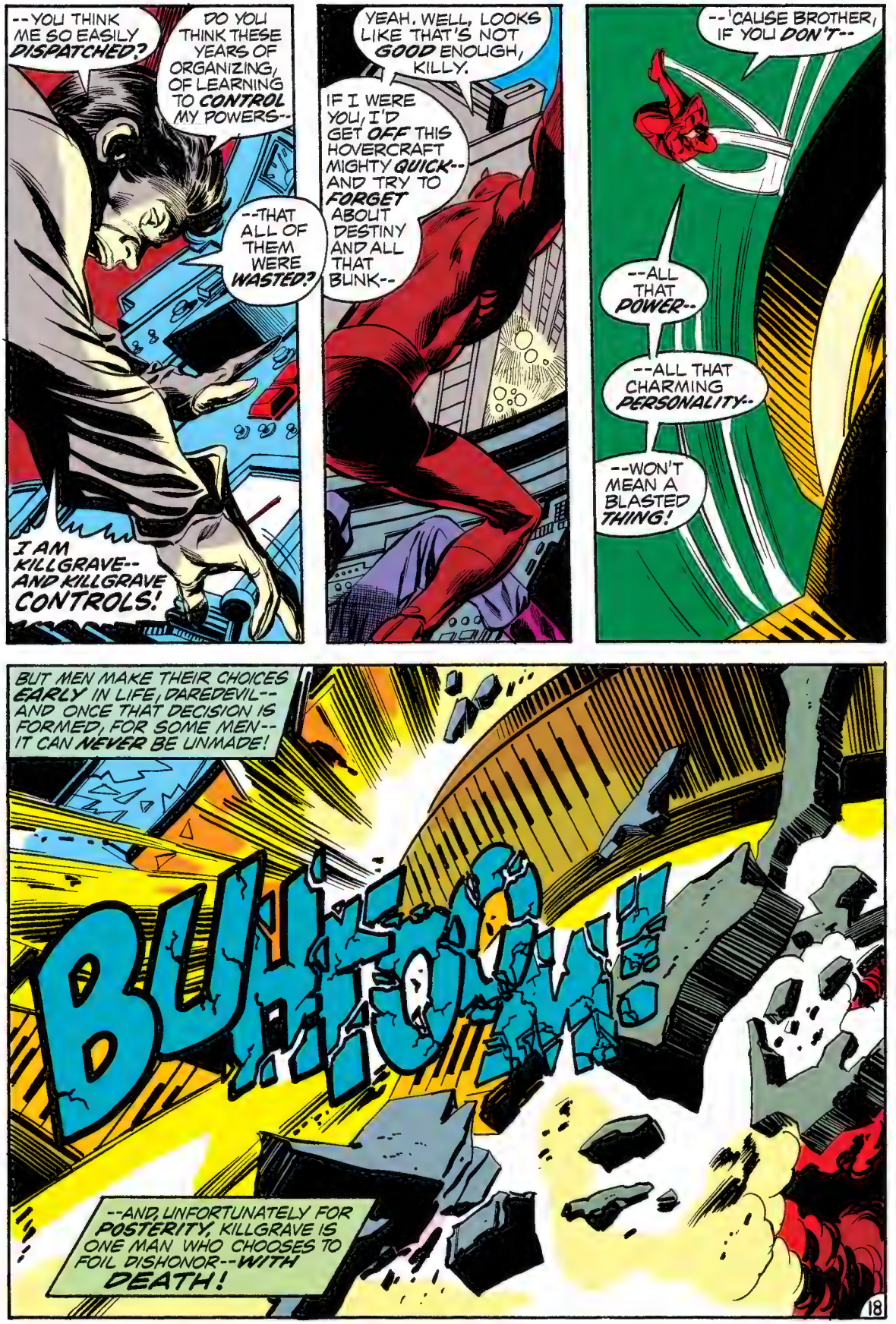

YOU'LL HAVE TO DO BETTER THAN THAT, SHORTIE.
--BUT WHEN SOMEBODY ELSE IS CALLING THE SHOTS--
'COURSE, IF YOU'D BEEN THINKING ON YOUR OWN--MAYBE YOU WOULD HAVE--


--AND I DO MEAN SHOTS--
--SOMETHING'S GOT TO GIVE IN THE OL' THOUGHT BOX!
THAT'S WHERE YOU MADE YOUR BIG MISTAKE, KILLY--

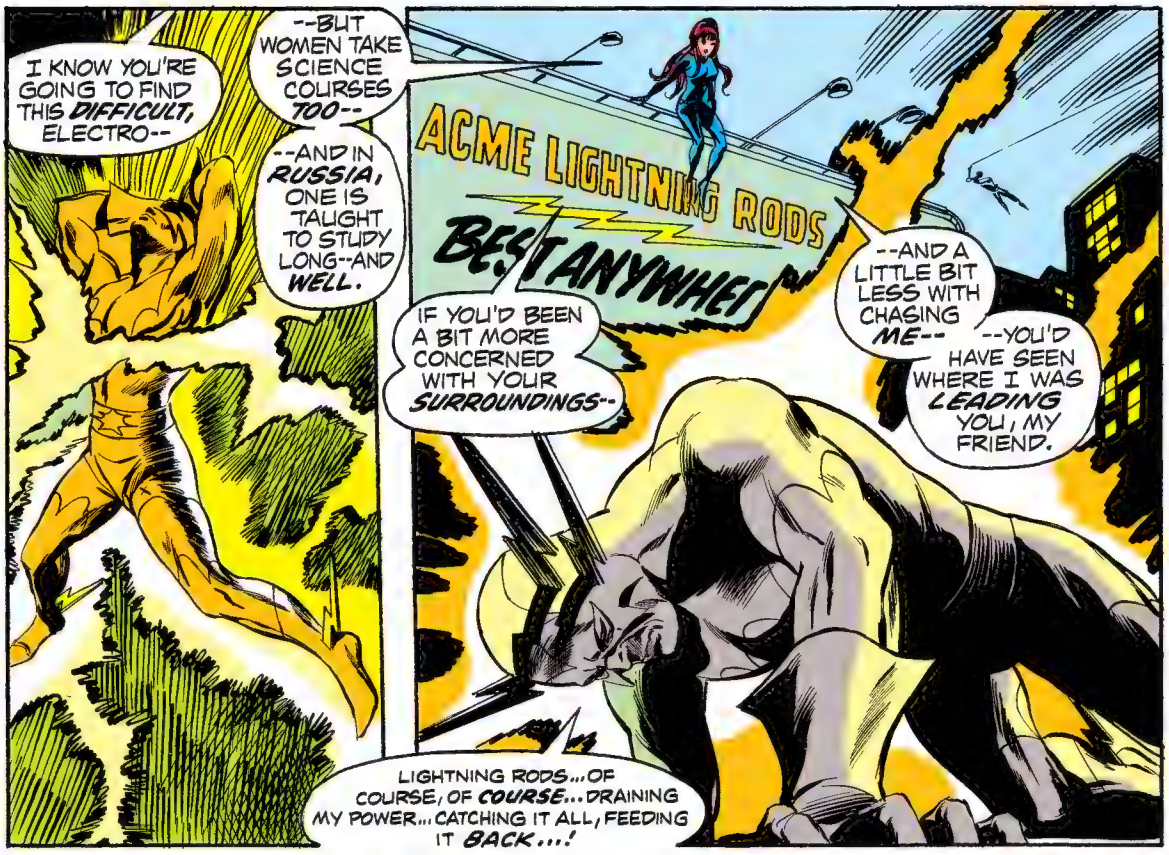
BUNCH
--NOT TO MENTION THE MINOR ONE OF TRUSTING THESE CLOWNS!


MISTAKE? NOT REALLY, DAREDEVIL.
I'M AFRAID THE ERROR IS YOURS-- IN ASSUMING THAT THEY ALONE ARE ALL THE THREAT I HAVE TO OFFER--
--YOU FORGET THE PURPLE MIST!
DO I, NOW?
MAYBE THAT'S WHY I FIXED UP A SET OF HANDY NOSTRIL FILTERS--
--'CAUSE I FORGOT ABOUT LAST TIME, RIGHT?
MOCK ME, THEN--
IT ONLY BETRAYS YOUR FEAR, YOUR IGNORANCE!
YEAH--LIKE THAT GAS BOMB SHOWS YOUR COURAGE, KILLGRAVE?
SORRY. I DON'T BUY.

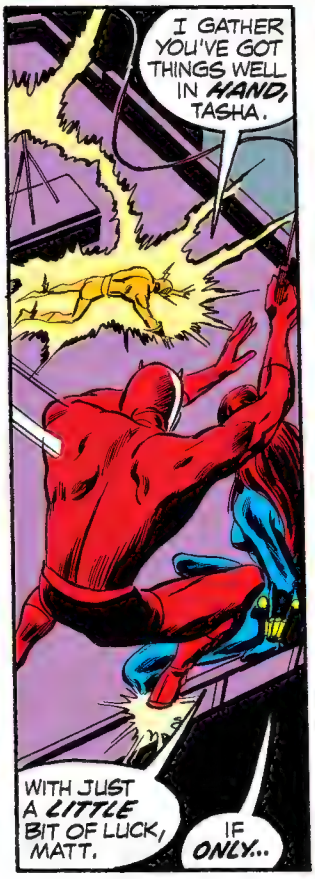

HIS HAND REACHES OUT-- CATCHING THE RICOCHETING BILLY CLUB AS IT ARCS PAST-- HIS MOTIONS ARE QUICK, LITHE--HIS ARM GUIDED BY SENSES BEYOND THOSE GIVEN TO NORMAL MEN--
TENSING, HE PITCHES FORWARD, BALANCING HIMSELF AT AN ANGLE TO THE HOVERCRAFT'S WILDLY SHIFTING PLANE--
HIS MOUTH FORMS A THIN LINE, HIS FEATURES GROW STIFF WITH CONCENTRATION--
HE HEARS THE WHINE OF SPINNING TURBINES-- THE SOFT UNDERTONE OF COMPLAINING GYROSCOPES--
HIS HAND SNAPS OUT, THE BUTT OF THE BILLY CLUB SMASHING DELICATE GEARS--
YOU FOOL--

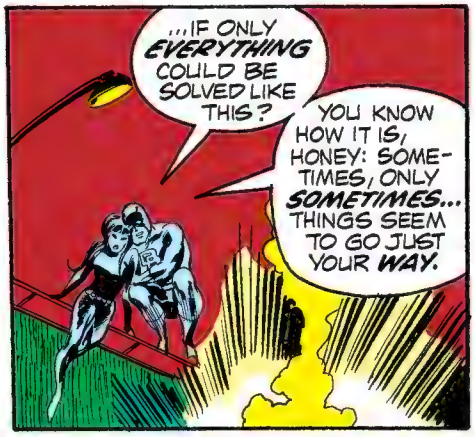

--YOU THINK ME SO EASILY DISPATCHED?
DO YOU THINK THESE YEARS OF ORGANIZING, OF LEARNING TO CONTROL MY POWERS--
--THAT ALL OF THEM WERE WASTED?
I AM KILLGRAVE-- AND KILLGRAVE CONTROLS!
YEAH. WELL, LOOKS LIKE THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH, KILLY.
IF I WERE YOU, I'D GET OFF THIS HOVERCRAFT MIGHTY QUICK-- AND TRY TO FORGET ABOUT DESTINY AND ALL THAT BUNK--
--'CAUSE BROTHER, IF YOU DON'T--
--ALL THAT POWER--
--ALL THAT CHARMING PERSONALITY--
--WON'T MEAN A BLASTED THING!
BUT MEN MAKE THEIR CHOICES EARLY IN LIFE, DAREDEVIL-- AND ONCE THAT DECISION IS FORMED, FOR SOME MEN-- IT CAN NEVER BE UNMADE!
BLAM!
--AND, UNFORTUNATELY FOR POSTERITY, KILLGRAVE IS ONE MAN WHO CHOOSES TO FOIL DISHONOR--WITH DEATH!
18

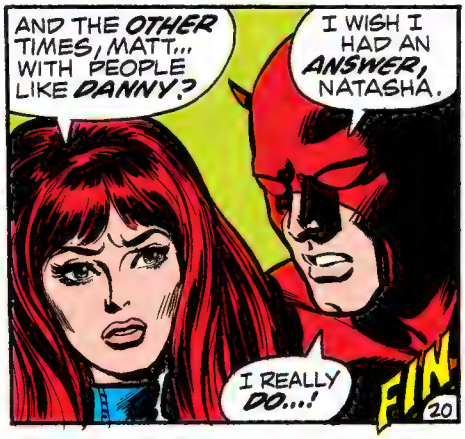
FUNNY, I STARTED THIS DAY WITH A CRAVING FOR VENGEANCE--
--TO PROVE TO MYSELF THAT I'M STILL A MAN.
NOW THAT I'VE GOT IT, THOUGH...IT TASTES PRETTY BAD.
"BUT I CAN'T GO ON MOPING ABOUT IT ALL NIGHT-- THERE'S THE WIDOW TO THINK ABOUT--
"--NOT THAT I BELIEVE I'VE GOT ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. I MIGHT AS WELL FACE IT--
"--WHEN IT COMES TO HEROICS, THAT PRETTY LITTLE LADY CAN HANDLE THINGS HERSELF!"
YOU'VE GIVEN ME QUITE A LITTLE CHASE, WOMAN--
--BUT WE'VE COME OUR DISTANCE, NOW--!
--THOUGH I PROMISE YOU THIS, MY DEAR--
--I'LL MAKE IT EASY ON YOU-- I WON'T LET IT HURT TOO-- UNNNNH!
--THAT-THAT ANTENNA-- THE WAY YOU DODGED BEHIND IT--!
--WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME? POWER-- ECHOING BACK--
KRAAACCKKK
--CAN'T STAND IT--THE PAIN--!
19


I KNOW YOU'RE GOING TO FIND THIS DIFFICULT, ELECTRO--
--BUT WOMEN TAKE SCIENCE COURSES TOO--
--AND IN RUSSIA, ONE IS TAUGHT TO STUDY LONG--AND WELL.
ACME LIGHTNING RODS
BEST ANYWHERE
IF YOU'D BEEN A BIT MORE CONCERNED WITH YOUR SURROUNDINGS--
--AND A LITTLE BIT LESS WITH CHASING ME--
--YOU'D HAVE SEEN WHERE I WAS LEADING YOU, MY FRIEND.
LIGHTNING RODS... OF COURSE, OF COURSE... DRAINING MY POWER... CATCHING IT ALL, FEEDING IT BACK...!

EXACTLY, ELECTRO.
BLAST YOU, WOMAN-- YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS, I PROMISE YOU!
I... PROMISE... YOU...


I GATHER YOU'VE GOT THINGS WELL IN HAND, TASHA.
WITH JUST A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK, MATT.
IF ONLY...


...IF ONLY EVERYTHING COULD BE SOLVED LIKE THIS?
YOU KNOW HOW IT IS, HONEY: SOMETIMES, ONLY SOMETIMES... THINGS SEEM TO GO JUST YOUR WAY.


AND THE OTHER TIMES, MATT... WITH PEOPLE LIKE DANNY?
I WISH I HAD AN ANSWER, NATASHA.
I REALLY DO...!
FIN

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
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DAREDEVIL®
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
WIDOW! HELP ME-- I'M FALLING!!
I--I CAN'T! I WANT TO--BUT I CAN'T!!
FEAR IS A MAN!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™

STAN LEE PRESENTS:
A GERRY CONWAY SCRIPTER // GENE COLAN ARTIST PRODUCTION
TOM PALMER, Inker
SAM ROSEN, Letterer
It's A COOL EVENING IN SAN FRANCISCO -- THE BALMY BAY BREEZES CARRY A HINT OF RAIN --- A PROMISE OF A STORMY TOMORROW --
--THEY ALSO CARRY TWO SWINGING FIGURES: THE SLEEK SCARLET FORM OF A CERTAIN RADAR-SENSED SWASH-BUCKLER---
---AND THE EQUALLY SLEEK VISION OF BEAUTY MEN CALL--- THE BLACK WIDOW!
DIVE, TASHA--- YOU'RE NOT QUITE REACHING ME--!
MATT-- I'M-- I'M NOT MAKING IT--- I--I CAN'T--
SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO ME--- I'M FALLING!
942

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HIS ARM JERKS OUT--- FINGERS **BRUSH**--AND THEN, THE WIDOW TUMBLES **AWAY,** HER EBON-SUITED BODY TWISTING--- HER HANDS FLAILING, LEGS **SPINNING**---

TASHA!

SHE **FROZE UP**... COULDN'T MAKE THE EXTRA EFFORT NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE **SWING!**

SOMETHING ABOUT HER HEART-BEAT--- RUSHING, **PANICKY!** SHE'S **TERRIFIED!**

I'VE GOT TO **CHANCE** IT--- PUSH AWAY FROM THE FLAG-POLE, TRY TO GRAB HER BEFORE IT'S--- **TOO LATE!**

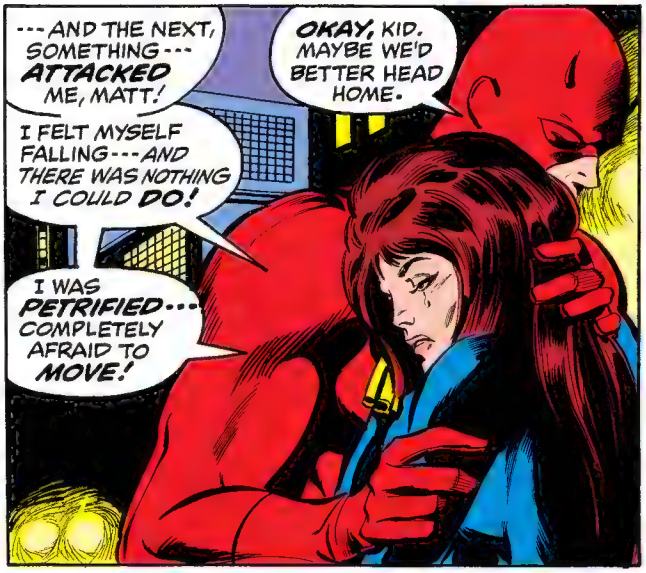
EEEEE

THE SINISTER SECRET OF PROJECT FOUR!

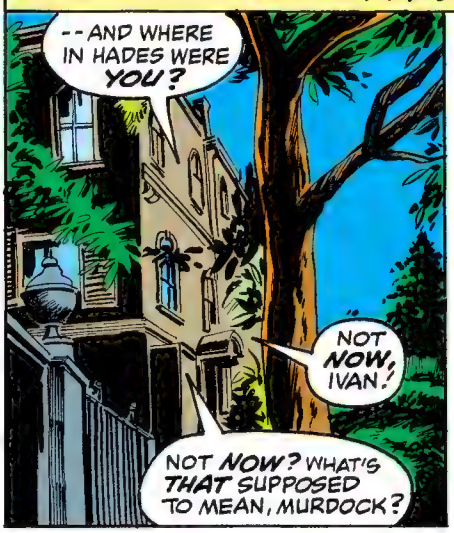
EEEEE EEEEEEEEE

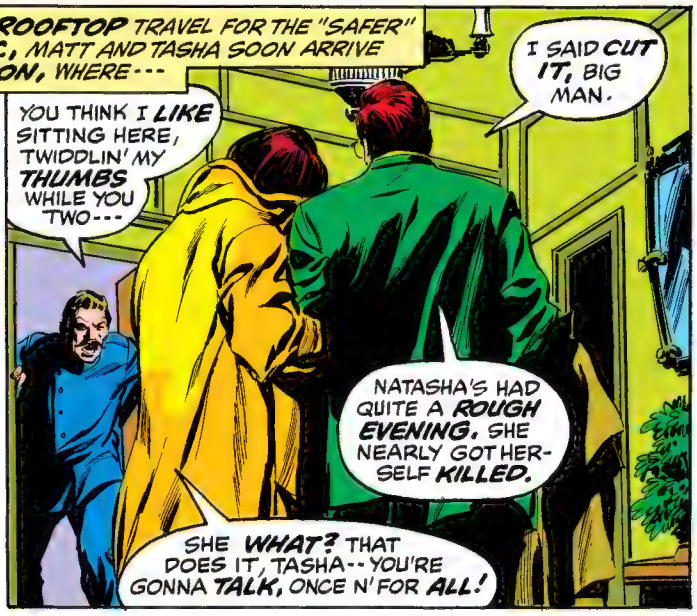
YET EVEN AS THE WIDOW'S UNCHARACTERISTIC **SCREAM** BEGINS TO BUILD TO BREAKING --FIVE CLAW-LIKE FINGERS **LUNGE OUT**---

---AND CLOSE!
HOLD TIGHT, WIDOW-LADY---
---'CAUSE NOW THAT I'VE GOT YOU---
--I'M GONNA TRY TO KEEP YOU!
MATT, I'M FRIGHTENED --I--I CAN'T EXPLAIN--
-- BUT I'M TERRIBLY--HORRIBLY AFRAID!
WHHHTTTCLICK!
YEAH, WELL--I'D KINDA GATHERED THAT.
EASY, GIRL--- EASY! JUST WRAP YOUR ARMS AROUND MY WAIST.
THIS IS WHAT YA CALL--YOUR "FRIENDLY-MAN-WITHOUT-FEAR-SKYWAY-TAXI-SERVICE!"
OR SOME-THING!
PLEASE, MATT--- I KNOW YOU'RE TRYING TO CHEER ME, TO TAKE MY MIND OFF WHAT JUST HAPPENED---
--- BUT PLEASE, DON'T--- I--- I CAN'T TAKE IT, RIGHT NOW!
OKAY, HONEY. YOU'RE CALLING THE SHOTS!
TALK WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT--- AND WHEN YOU DO---
TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED BACK THERE!
I-- I JUST WISH I KNEW, MATT!
4

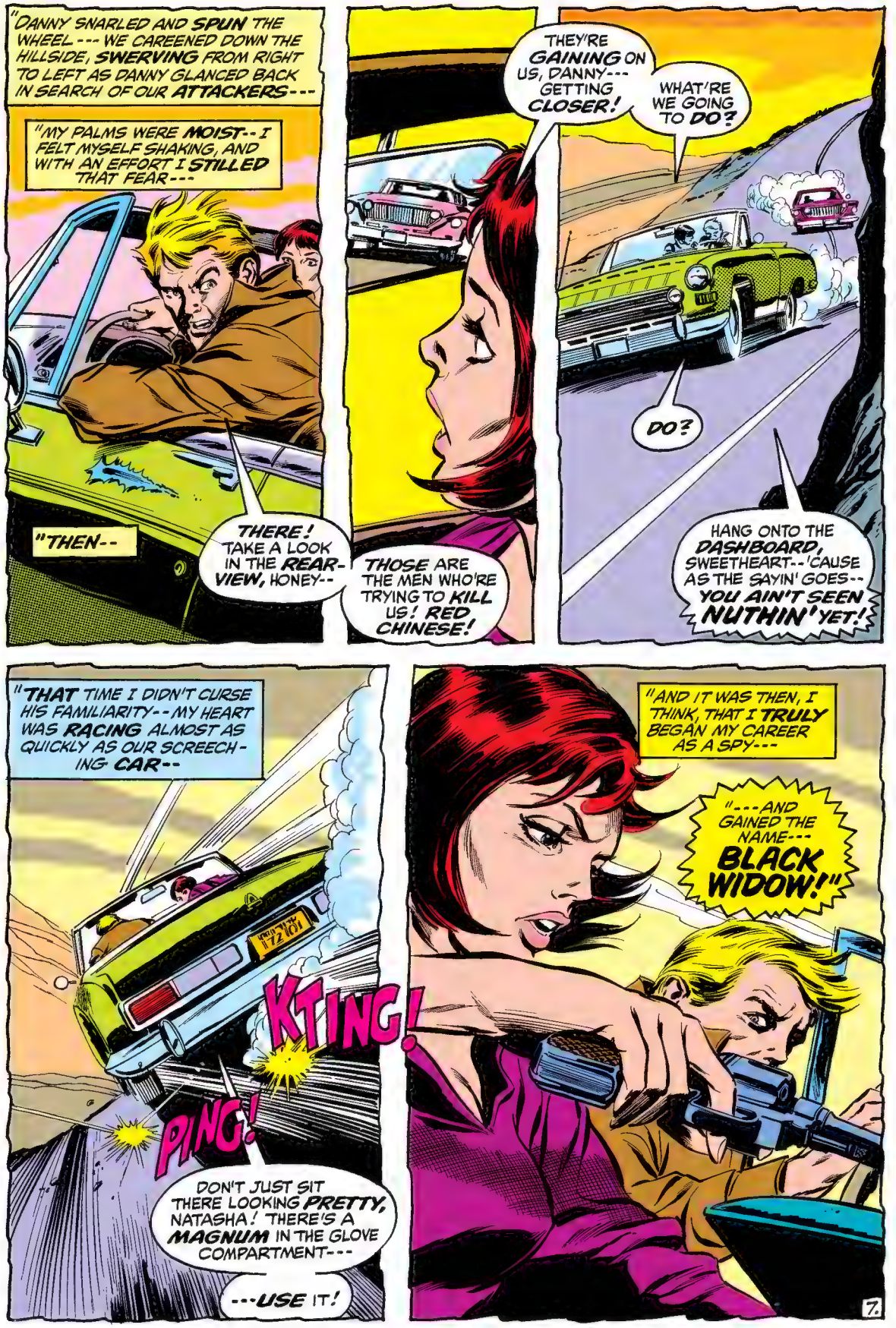

---AND THE NEXT, SOMETHING--- ATTACKED ME, MATT!
I FELT MYSELF FALLING---AND THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO!
I WAS PETRIFIED--- COMPLETELY AFRAID TO MOVE!
OKAY, KID. MAYBE WE'D BETTER HEAD HOME.

ESCHEWING THE DUBIOUS BENEFITS OF ROOFTOP TRAVEL FOR THE "SAFER" HAZARDS OF SAN FRANCISCAN TRAFFIC, MATT AND TASHA SOON ARRIVE AT THE WIDOW'S NORTH SHORE MANSION, WHERE---




I SAID CUT IT, BIG MAN.
YOU THINK I LIKE SITTING HERE, TWIDDLIN' MY THUMBS WHILE YOU TWO---
NATASHA'S HAD QUITE A ROUGH EVENING. SHE NEARLY GOT HER-SELF KILLED.
SHE WHAT? THAT DOES IT, TASHA--YOU'RE GONNA TALK, ONCE N' FOR ALL!

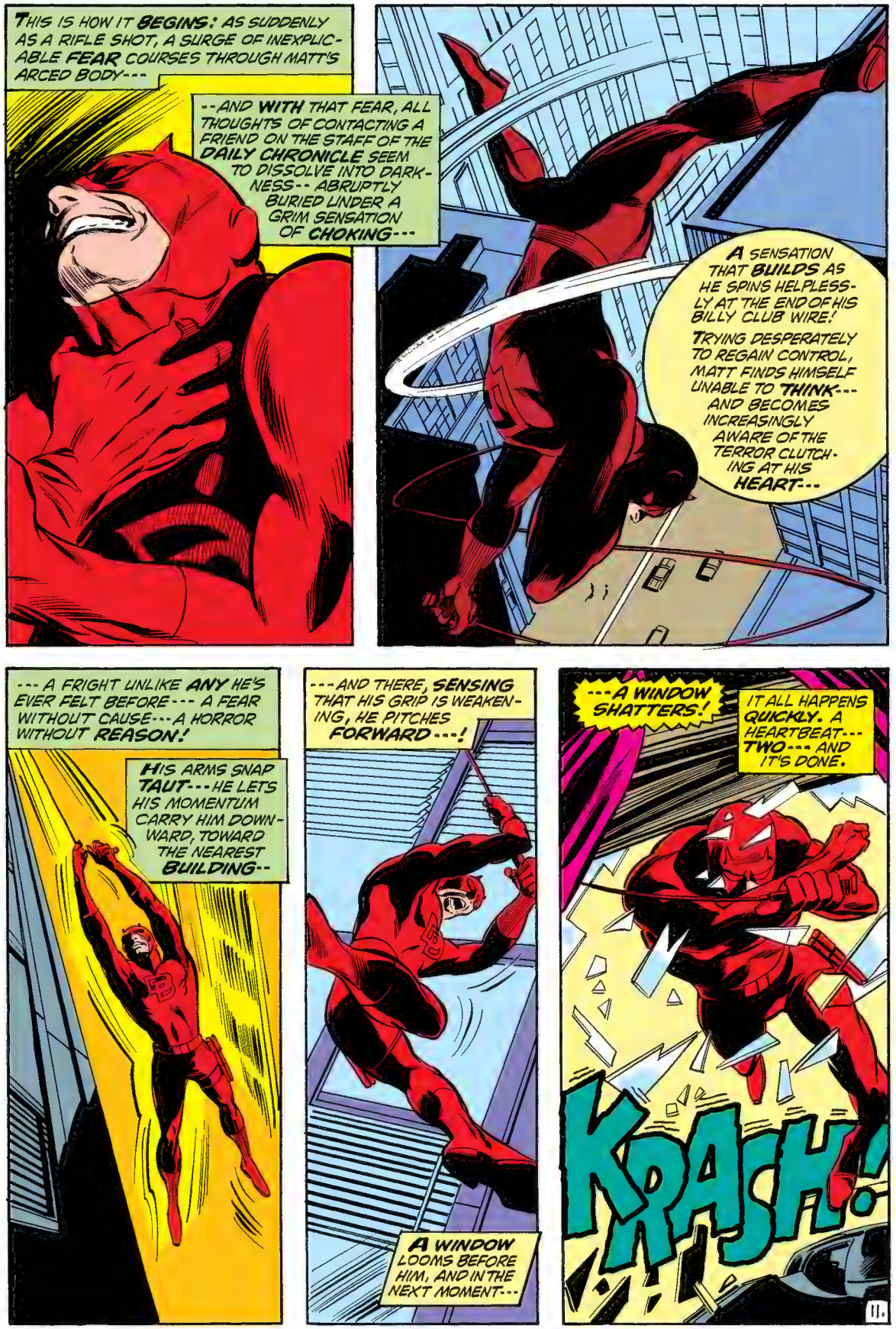
SAY, LOOK, PRINCESS--- I'M SORRY I---
WE'VE ALL BEEN A LITTLE TENSE, IVE.
LET'S LET IT GO--- AND LISTEN TO WHAT SHE HAS TO SAY.
THANKS, MATT. I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN---
"---EXCEPT WHERE IT ALL REALLY STARTED, IN A LOS ANGELES AIRPORT---IN 1964---
"MY FIRST ASSIGNMENT AS A SPY---AND MEN, THE LADY WAS SCARED---
"THIS WAS BEFORE ALMOST EVERYTHING-- BEFORE I FIRST FOUGHT IRON MAN, BEFORE I MET CLINT BARTON AND ALL THE AVENGERS--- BEFORE I BECAME THE PERSON I NOW AM---
"IT WAS A DIFFERENT MADAME NATASHA WHO FIRST HEARD THE VOICE OF THE MAN YOU KNOW AS DANNY FRENCH---
WELCOME TO THE U.S. OF A., MATA HARI.
THE NAME'S FRENCH--DANNY FRENCH.
THE CAR'S OUTSIDE. LET'S GET ROLLING, SWEETHEART.
MISTER FRENCH--- I AM MOST DEFINITELY NOT YOUR "SWEETHEART".
"DANNY RAISED HIS EYEBROW, GIVING ME A LOOK I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND-- THEN. I KNOW THAT GLANCE ALL TOO WELL, NOW---
"HE'D RENTED A CAR, AND MOMENTS LATER WE WERE SPEEDING TOWARD DOWNTOWN L.A.-- TALKING IDLY, LEARNING ABOUT EACH OTHER, UNTIL---
"---IT HAPPENED!
SPTANG!
DOWN, NATASHA-- DOWN!
6

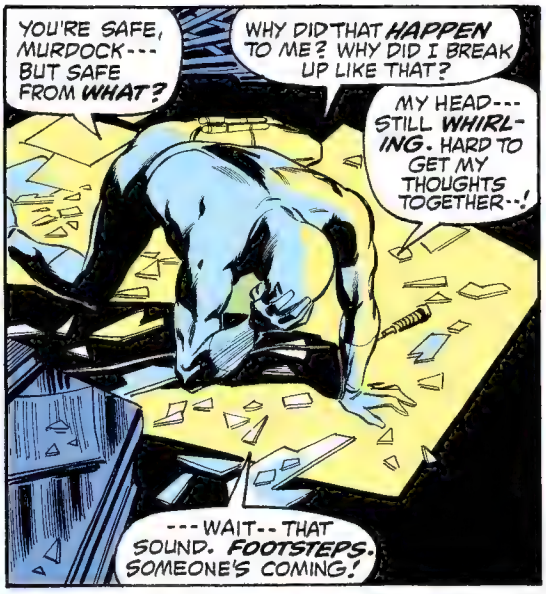

"DANNY SNARLED AND SPUN THE WHEEL--- WE CAREENED DOWN THE HILLSIDE, SWERVING FROM RIGHT TO LEFT AS DANNY GLANCED BACK IN SEARCH OF OUR ATTACKERS---
"MY PALMS WERE MOIST-- I FELT MYSELF SHAKING, AND WITH AN EFFORT I STILLED THAT FEAR---
"THEN--
THERE! TAKE A LOOK IN THE REAR-VIEW, HONEY--
THOSE ARE THE MEN WHO'RE TRYING TO KILL US! RED CHINESE!
THEY'RE GAINING ON US, DANNY--- GETTING CLOSER!
WHAT'RE WE GOING TO DO?
DO?
HANG ONTO THE DASHBOARD, SWEETHEART--'CAUSE AS THE SAYIN' GOES-- YOU AIN'T SEEN NUTHIN' YET!
"THAT TIME I DIDN'T CURSE HIS FAMILIARITY-- MY HEART WAS RACING ALMOST AS QUICKLY AS OUR SCREECHING CAR--
KTING!
PING!
DON'T JUST SIT THERE LOOKING PRETTY, NATASHA! THERE'S A MAGNUM IN THE GLOVE COMPARTMENT---
---USE IT!
"AND IT WAS THEN, I THINK, THAT I TRULY BEGAN MY CAREER AS A SPY---
"---AND GAINED THE NAME--- BLACK WIDOW!"

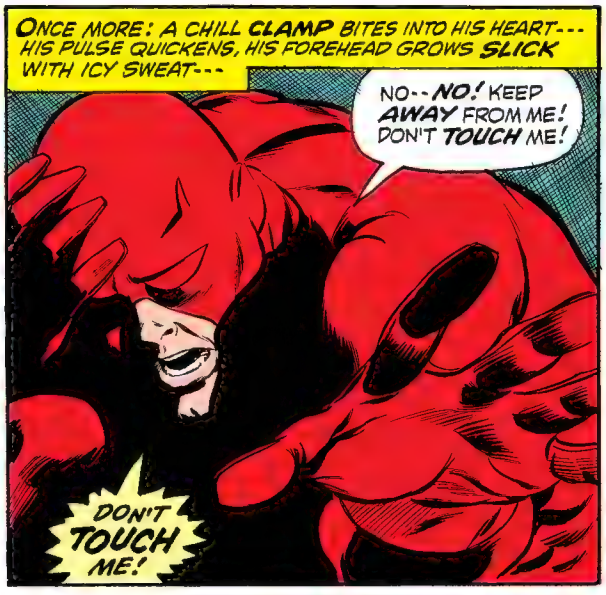
PTOW!
KBAM
SCREEEEEEEEEE
EEE
CHOOM!
I DIDN'T WANT THEM TO DIE--- BUT THEY LOST CONTROL OF THEIR CAR--
---JUST AS I SEEM TO HAVE LOST CONTROL ---OF MY LIFE!
TASHA! IS THAT IT? EVERY-THING?
NO, MATT--- THERE'S MORE. BUT---
---I CAN'T TELL YOU NOW!
TRUST ME, MATT. OKAY?
BUZZZZ
CATCH HOLD OF YOUR-SELF, NATASHA.
IVAN--- COULD YOU SEE WHO'S AT THE DOOR?
TASHA, WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE NOT ACTING LIKE YOUR-SELF---NOT AT ALL.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, MATT.
I'M--AFRAID. AND I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT.
8

MATT, IT'S THAT GUY WHO PHONED YOU YESTERDAY.
LARRY CRANSTON. HE MUST WANT ME TO JOIN HIS FIRM BADLY---
---AND HE'S BROUGHT ALONG A FRIEND.
BUT WAIT--- THAT SECOND HEARTBEAT---
---WHAT'S LARRY SAYING?
--- MEET JASON SLOAN, MATT.
I BELIEVE MURDOCK AND I HAVE HEARD OF EACH OTHER, CRANSTON---
HE'S THE SENIOR PARTNER IN THE FIRM. MR. SLOAN IS---
---SO THERE'S NO NEED TO BE SO FORMAL.
PERHAPS, MR. SLOAN.
IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING TO WORK WITH A MAN OF YOUR REPUTATION.
---YET, THAT'S NOT ALL. I CAN ALMOST SENSE AN AURA ENCLOSING SLOAN---
WELCOME TO SAN FRANCISCO, MR. MURDOCK. I HOPE WE'LL BE--- SEEING MORE OF EACH OTHER.
THERE. NOW I'VE GOT IT---SOMETHING I USED TO FEEL BEFORE---
---WHEN I FIRST MET MEN LIKE THE OWL---OR EVEN KILLGRAVE.
IT'S AS THOUGH MY MIND RECEIVED A DOUBLE IMAGE, ONE FROM MY SENSES---THE OTHER FROM MY INSTINCTS!
THIS MAN SLOAN--- HE PLAYS WITH PEOPLE AS THOUGH THEY WERE PUPPETS---
HE USES THEM--- MANIPULATES THEM--- JUST AS HE WANTS TO USE ME.

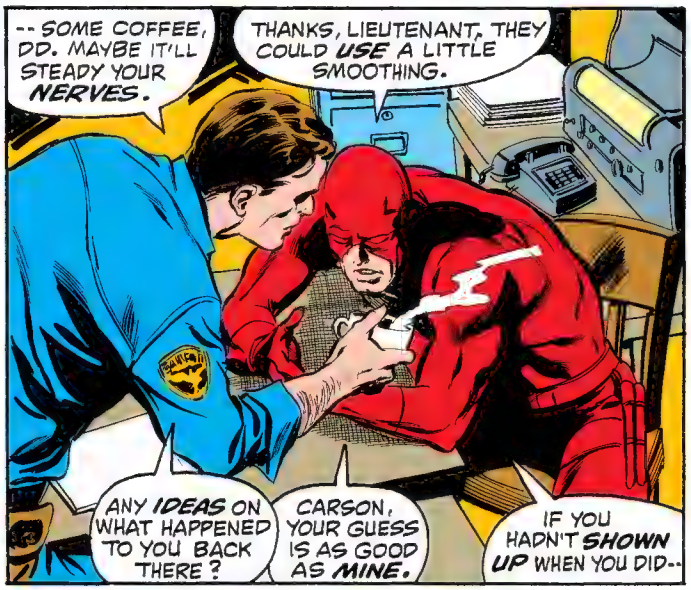
YOU SEE, MATT--- WE'RE REALLY EAGER TO HAVE YOU WITH US.
WHEN I TOLD JASON I'D KNOWN YOU IN COLLEGE---
---WELL, YOU CAN UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH---
EXCUSE ME, CRANSTON.
I'M SURE MR. MURDOCK HAS MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO THINK ABOUT.
MR. SLOAN, I JUST MEANT TO---
LATER, LARRY. GO START THE CAR, WILL YOU?
I'M SORRY IF WE'VE INTRUDED, MR. MURDOCK. PERHAPS WE'LL HAVE DINNER SOME EVENING--?
YOU AND THE YOUNG LADY---?
MATT, YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HIM.
---THERE'S SOMETHING SO--- EVIL ABOUT THE WAY HE MOVES--- ABOUT HIS EYES.
TASHA, IN MY OWN WAY--- I "SAW."
"---AND BELIEVE ME, WHAT I SAW--- WASN'T PRETTY!"
THERE'S NO MORE TALK ABOUT THE MYSTERIOUS PROJECT FOUR--- BUT THE SUBJECT NEVER LEAVES MATT'S INQUISITIVE MIND, AND SO THE FOLLOWING MORNING FINDS HIM SWINGING THROUGH DOWNTOWN S.F.---
---HEADED TOWARD A DESTINATION THAT WILL NEVER BE REACHED!


THIS IS HOW IT BEGINS: AS SUDDENLY AS A RIFLE SHOT, A SURGE OF INEXPLICABLE FEAR COURSES THROUGH MATT'S ARCED BODY---
--AND WITH THAT FEAR, ALL THOUGHTS OF CONTACTING A FRIEND ON THE STAFF OF THE DAILY CHRONICLE SEEM TO DISSOLVE INTO DARKNESS-- ABRUPTLY BURIED UNDER A GRIM SENSATION OF CHOKING---
A SENSATION THAT BUILDS AS HE SPINS HELPLESSLY AT THE END OF HIS BILLY CLUB WIRE!
TRYING DESPERATELY TO REGAIN CONTROL, MATT FINDS HIMSELF UNABLE TO THINK--- AND BECOMES INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE TERROR CLUTCHING AT HIS HEART---
--- A FRIGHT UNLIKE ANY HE'S EVER FELT BEFORE--- A FEAR WITHOUT CAUSE--- A HORROR WITHOUT REASON!
HIS ARMS SNAP TAUT--- HE LETS HIS MOMENTUM CARRY HIM DOWNWARD, TOWARD THE NEAREST BUILDING--
---AND THERE, SENSING THAT HIS GRIP IS WEAKENING, HE PITCHES FORWARD---!
A WINDOW LOOMS BEFORE HIM, AND IN THE NEXT MOMENT---
---A WINDOW SHATTERS!
IT ALL HAPPENS QUICKLY. A HEARTBEAT--- TWO--- AND IT'S DONE.
KRASH!
11

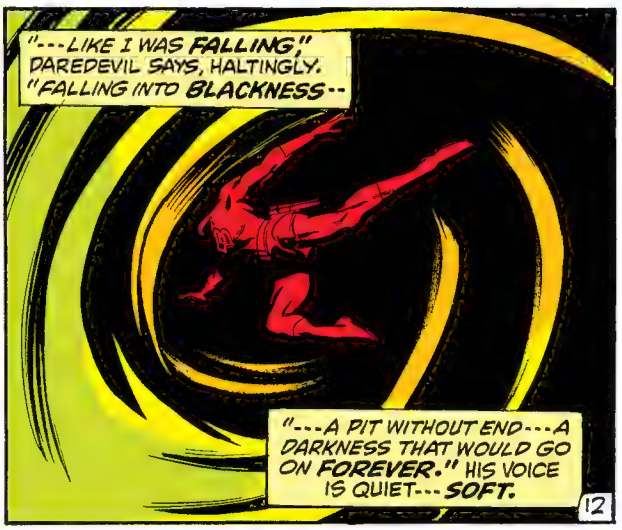

YOU'RE SAFE, MURDOCK--- BUT SAFE FROM WHAT?
WHY DID THAT HAPPEN TO ME? WHY DID I BREAK UP LIKE THAT?
MY HEAD--- STILL WHIRLING. HARD TO GET MY THOUGHTS TOGETHER--!
---WAIT--THAT SOUND. FOOTSTEPS. SOMEONE'S COMING!


ONCE MORE: A CHILL CLAMP BITES INTO HIS HEART--- HIS PULSE QUICKENS, HIS FOREHEAD GROWS SLICK WITH ICY SWEAT---
NO--NO! KEEP AWAY FROM ME! DON'T TOUCH ME!
DON'T TOUCH ME!

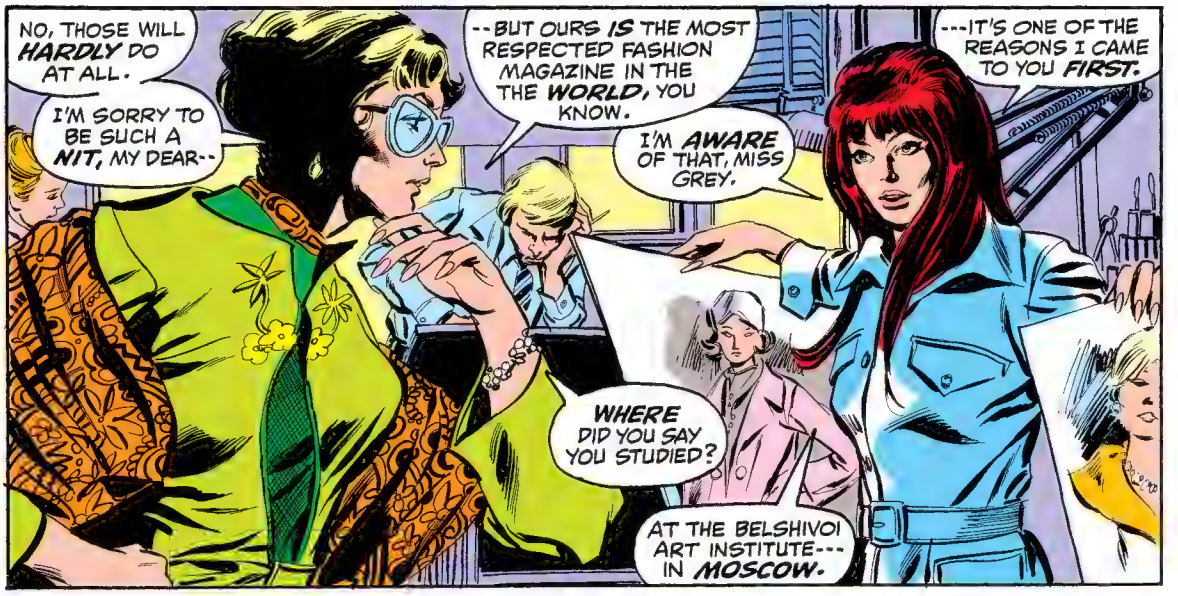
DON'T TOUCH ME!


--SOME COFFEE, DD. MAYBE IT'LL STEADY YOUR NERVES.
THANKS, LIEUTENANT. THEY COULD USE A LITTLE SMOOTHING.
ANY IDEAS ON WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU BACK THERE?
CARSON, YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE.
IF YOU HADN'T SHOWN UP WHEN YOU DID--

BE GLAD IT WASN'T ONE OF THE OTHER GUYS, DARE-DEVIL.
THE BOYS AREN'T BIG FANS OF YOURS, Y'KNOW!
TAKE MY WORD ON IT, PAUL---I KNOW.
CAN YOU TELL ME HOW IT WAS? MAYBE THAT'LL HELP.

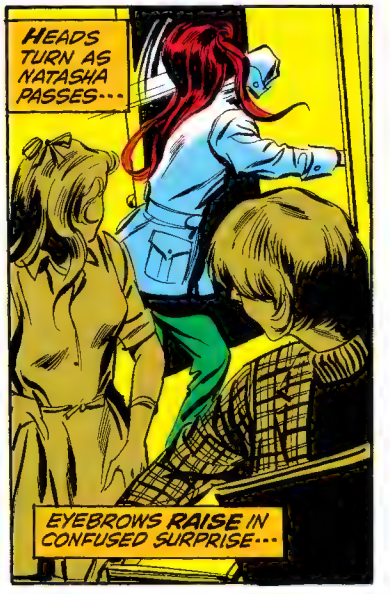

"---LIKE I WAS FALLING," DAREDEVIL SAYS, HALTINGLY. "FALLING INTO BLACKNESS--
"---A PIT WITHOUT END---A DARKNESS THAT WOULD GO ON FOREVER." HIS VOICE IS QUIET--- SOFT.

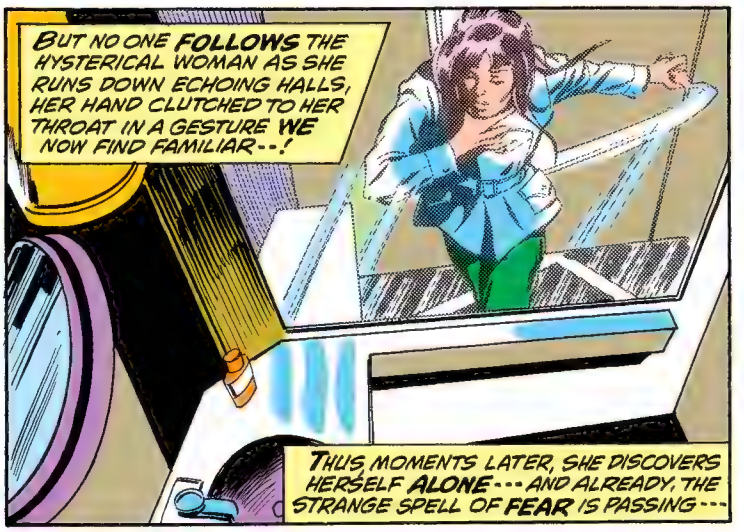
HE SHIVERS FROM THE MEMORY, AND THEN RISES WITH A SIGH-- AND STOPS AS CARSON MOVES TO HALT HIM---
WHOA, OLD BUDDY. YOU'RE FORGETTING SOMETHING---
--YOU'RE UNDER ARREST.
PAUL, WHAT--?
THE SMALL MATTER OF A BROKEN WINDOW, REMEMBER?
I REALLY HATE TO DO THIS, PAUL. YOU'RE A GOOD FRIEND---
--BUT I CAN'T LET YOU KEEP ME HERE.
I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO ME --- MY WAY.
SORRY, OLD BUDDY! THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT GOES!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE MANAGED TO ESCAPE, DD.
GUESS YOU JUST OVERPOWERED ME!
ONE FAVOR: BE CAREFUL. I'VE GOT A FEELING YOU'RE IN TROUBLE---
---MORE TROUBLE THAN YOU KNOW.
THANKS FOR THE COFFEE AND ADVICE, LIEUTENANT.
I'LL TRY TO KEEP MY NOSE CLEAN.
NOT TOO HARD --BUT I'LL TRY.
IN A WAY, IT'S ALMOST WORTH A SWOLLEN JAW TO SEE DD BACK ON HIS FEET---
YOU'VE GOTTA ADMIRE A MAN LIKE THAT--- A GUY WHO DOES WHAT HE HAS TO, NO MATTER WHAT!
CARSON, WHAT HAPPENED IN HERE?
NOTHING, COMMISSIONER--- NOTHING AT ALL.
WHILE, ELSEWHERE IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA---
I'M NOT SURE, YOUNG WOMAN--- THERE IS A CERTAIN FRESHNESS TO THE STYLE--- BUT, STILL---
PERHAPS THESE OTHERS?
13

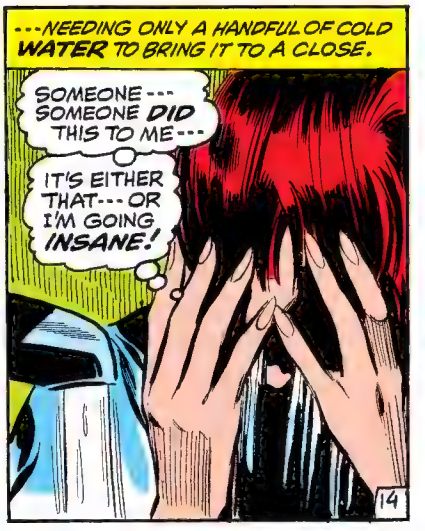

NO, THOSE WILL HARDLY DO AT ALL.
I'M SORRY TO BE SUCH A NIT, MY DEAR--
--BUT OURS IS THE MOST RESPECTED FASHION MAGAZINE IN THE THE WORLD, YOU KNOW.
I'M AWARE OF THAT, MISS GREY.
---IT'S ONE OF THE REASONS I CAME TO YOU FIRST.
WHERE DID YOU SAY YOU STUDIED?
AT THE BELSHIVOI ART INSTITUTE--- IN MOSCOW.

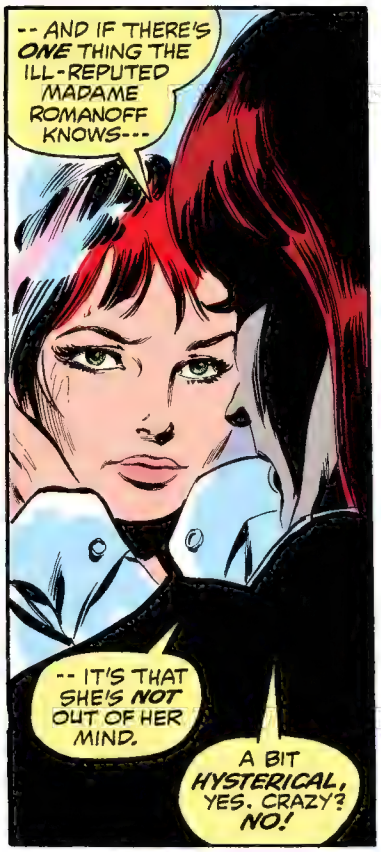
PURSING HER LIPS, THE ANGULAR MISS GREY RESUMES HER STUDY OF NATASHA'S ARTWORK---AND SO SHE DOESN'T SEE NATASHA'S EYES GO WIDE---
--OR HEAR THE BLACK WIDOW TAKE A SUDDEN, FRIGHTENED BREATH--!

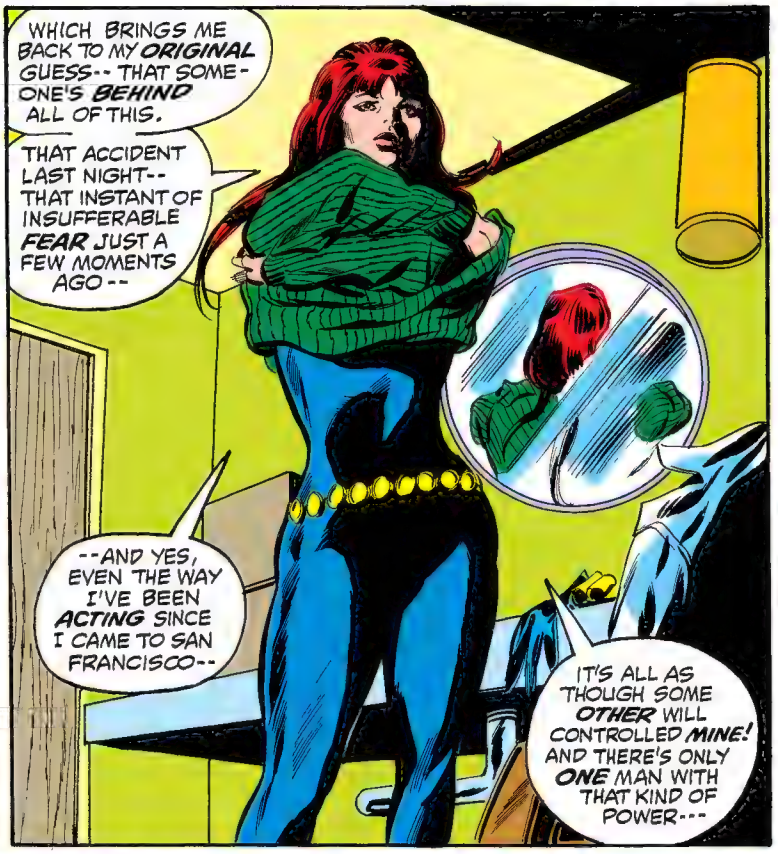
NO, SHE ONLY BECOMES AWARE OF NATASHA'S DISTRESS--- WHEN THE WIDOW BEGINS TO SCREAM!
EEEEEEEE
AND EVEN THEN, HER ONLY REACTION IS A DISAPPROVING FROWN---AND A CASUAL SNIFF OF ANNOYANCE.

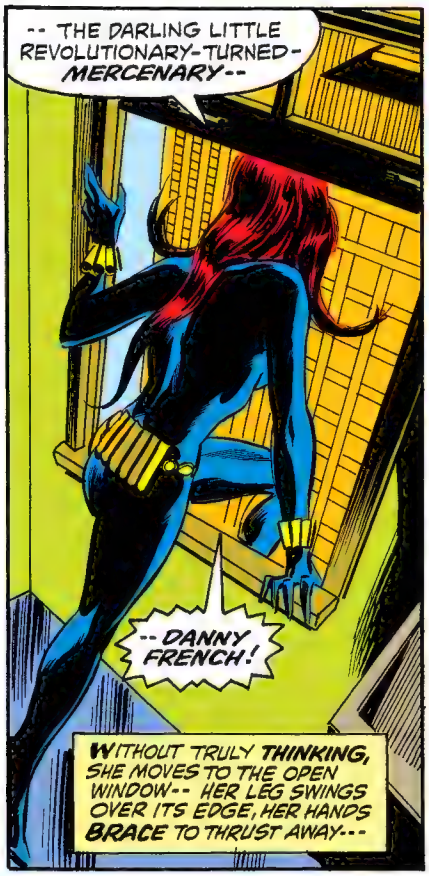

HEADS TURN AS NATASHA PASSES---
EYEBROWS RAISE IN CONFUSED SURPRISE---


BUT NO ONE FOLLOWS THE HYSTERICAL WOMAN AS SHE RUNS DOWN ECHOING HALLS, HER HAND CLUTCHED TO HER THROAT IN A GESTURE WE NOW FIND FAMILIAR--!
THUS, MOMENTS LATER, SHE DISCOVERS HERSELF ALONE---AND ALREADY, THE STRANGE SPELL OF FEAR IS PASSING---

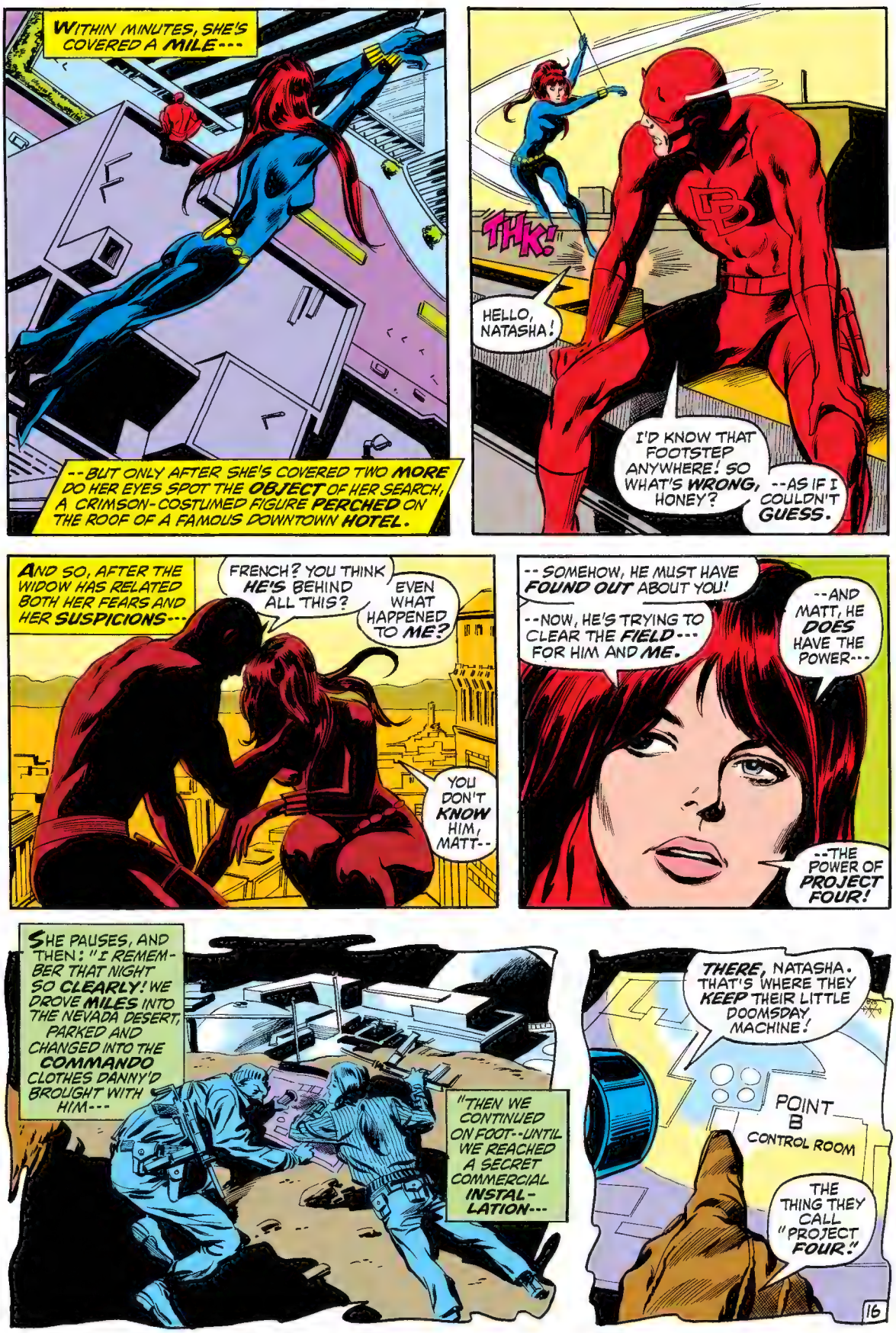

---NEEDING ONLY A HANDFUL OF COLD WATER TO BRING IT TO A CLOSE.
SOMEONE--- SOMEONE DID THIS TO ME---
IT'S EITHER THAT--- OR I'M GOING INSANE!


-- AND IF THERE'S ONE THING THE ILL-REPUTED MADAME ROMANOFF KNOWS---
-- IT'S THAT SHE'S NOT OUT OF HER MIND.
A BIT HYSTERICAL, YES. CRAZY? NO!


WHICH BRINGS ME BACK TO MY ORIGINAL GUESS-- THAT SOMEONE'S BEHIND ALL OF THIS.
THAT ACCIDENT LAST NIGHT-- THAT INSTANT OF INSUFFERABLE FEAR JUST A FEW MOMENTS AGO --
--AND YES, EVEN THE WAY I'VE BEEN ACTING SINCE I CAME TO SAN FRANCISCO--
IT'S ALL AS THOUGH SOME OTHER WILL CONTROLLED MINE! AND THERE'S ONLY ONE MAN WITH THAT KIND OF POWER---


-- THE DARLING LITTLE REVOLUTIONARY-TURNED-MERCENARY--
-- DANNY FRENCH!
WITHOUT TRULY THINKING, SHE MOVES TO THE OPEN WINDOW-- HER LEG SWINGS OVER ITS EDGE, HER HANDS BRACE TO THRUST AWAY---

--AND IN AN INSTANT-- SHE'S GONE!
PERHAPS ANOTHER MAN OR WOMAN MIGHT HAVE HESITATED BEFORE MAKING THAT LUNGE-- THEIR BODIES PARALYZED BY A TERRIFIED MEMORY OF THE EVENING BEFORE---
BUT THEN-- THEY WOULDN'T BE-- THE BLACK WIDOW!


WITHIN MINUTES, SHE'S COVERED A MILE---
--BUT ONLY AFTER SHE'S COVERED TWO MORE DO HER EYES SPOT THE OBJECT OF HER SEARCH, A CRIMSON-COSTUMED FIGURE PERCHED ON THE ROOF OF A FAMOUS DOWNTOWN HOTEL.
THK!
HELLO, NATASHA!
I'D KNOW THAT FOOTSTEP ANYWHERE! SO WHAT'S WRONG, HONEY?
--AS IF I COULDN'T GUESS.
AND SO, AFTER THE WIDOW HAS RELATED BOTH HER FEARS AND HER SUSPICIONS---
FRENCH? YOU THINK HE'S BEHIND ALL THIS?
EVEN WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?
YOU DON'T KNOW HIM, MATT--
-- SOMEHOW, HE MUST HAVE FOUND OUT ABOUT YOU!
--NOW, HE'S TRYING TO CLEAR THE FIELD--- FOR HIM AND ME.
--AND MATT, HE DOES HAVE THE POWER---
--THE POWER OF PROJECT FOUR!
SHE PAUSES, AND THEN: "I REMEMBER THAT NIGHT SO CLEARLY! WE DROVE MILES INTO THE NEVADA DESERT, PARKED AND CHANGED INTO THE COMMANDO CLOTHES DANNY'D BROUGHT WITH HIM---
"THEN WE CONTINUED ON FOOT--UNTIL WE REACHED A SECRET COMMERCIAL INSTALLATION---
THERE, NATASHA. THAT'S WHERE THEY KEEP THEIR LITTLE DOOMSDAY MACHINE!
POINT B CONTROL ROOM
THE THING THEY CALL "PROJECT FOUR!"

"I STARED AT THE MAP IN WONDER--I'D NEVER COME SO CLOSE TO ACTUAL ESPIONAGE BEFORE--
"--HE TRIED TO KISS ME, THEN--
"--I HAD TO PUSH HIM AWAY.
DON'T-- DON'T EVER DO THAT AGAIN!
DON'T EVER TOUCH ME!
SURE, SISTER. SOME OTHER TIME-- ANOTHER PLACE.
"HE WAS STILL LAUGHING WHEN WE HEARD THE SOUND-- A SUDDEN FOOT-STEP--
SNAP!
BLAST IT! THE GUARD--!
"DANNY SWUNG THE FLASHLIGHT BEAM IN A CUTTING ARC--- THE LIGHT STRUCK THE MAN FULL IN THE FACE, BLINDING HIM--
"HE WAS A TALL MAN, BEEFY! I NOTICED THAT HIS UNIFORM WAS NOT THAT OF YOUR GOVERN-MENT--
"--- AND THEN I ATTACKED!
BTCK!
"I WAS IN A RAGE OVER DANNY'S CASUAL TREAT-MENT OF ME -- I'M AFRAID I WASN'T GENTLE--
MRRPPHMP!

SLUMP!

KRUNCH!

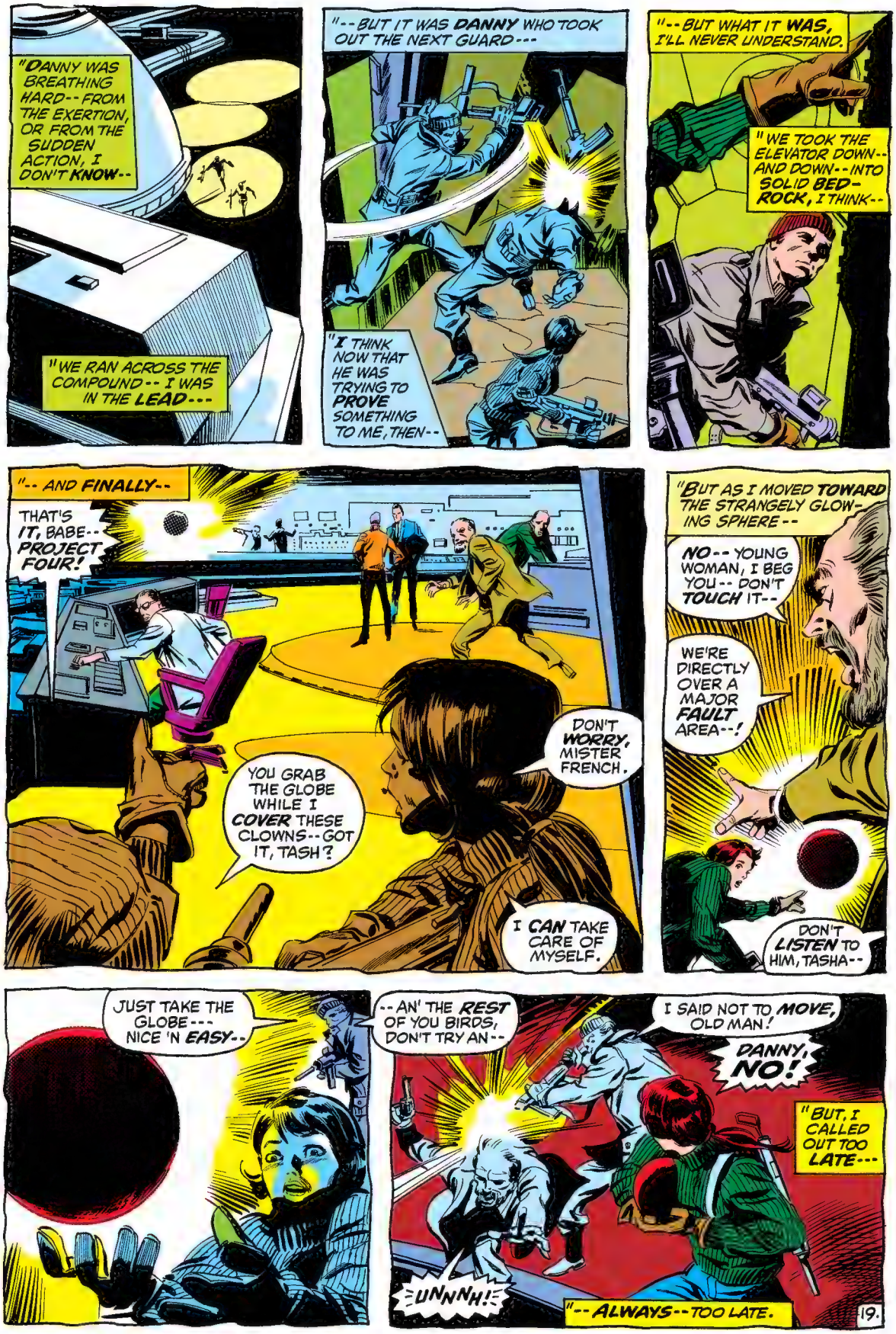
"NEEDLESS TO SAY, MISTER FRENCH WAS SOMEWHAT TAKEN ABACK BY THE GUSTO OF MY PERFORMANCE--
LORD, NATASHA!
UN--WE'D BETTER --GET MOVING, DON'T YOU THINK?

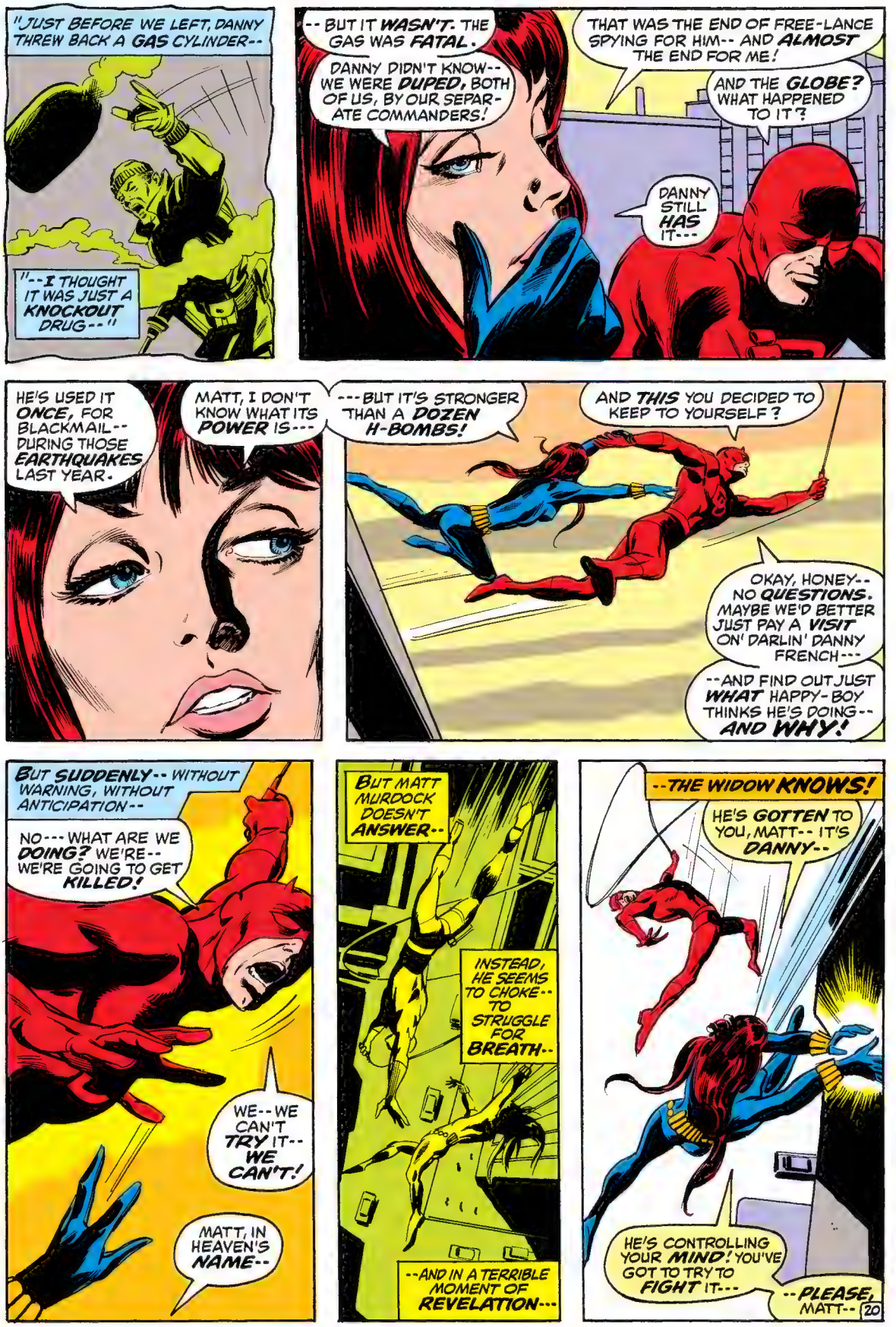
"THERE WERE SEVERAL FENCES TO CROSS, AND YET ANOTHER GUARD TO DISPOSE OF---
"THE FENCES WERE ELECTRIFIED--- THE GUARD WAS UNWARY.

HE'S DOWN, DANNY! HOW LONG WILL THE GAS HOLD HIM?
LONG ENOUGH FOR US TO TAKE A QUICK TRIP INSIDE, DEAR LADY!
BUT RIGHT NOW, PERHAPS WE'D BETTER BACK OFF--

--AND LET THAT HANDY RUSSIAN FENCE-REMOVER DO ITS TIDY LITTLE WORK!

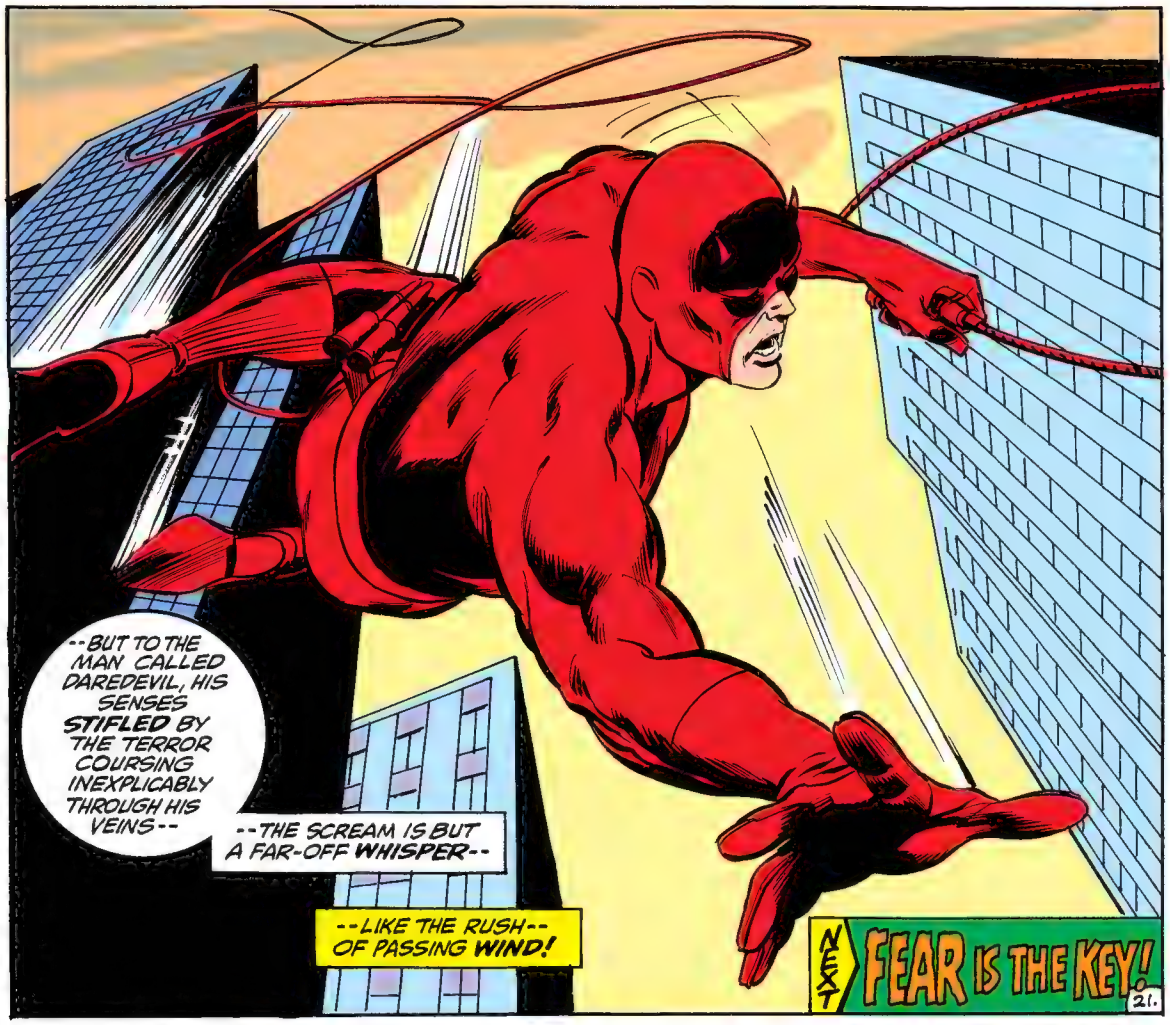
"THE BOMB WAS ALMOST SILENT---
MRRRF!
"--AT LEAST, THE SLEEPING GUARD DIDN'T SEEM TO MIND!


"DANNY WAS BREATHING HARD--FROM THE EXERTION, OR FROM THE SUDDEN ACTION, I DON'T KNOW--
"WE RAN ACROSS THE COMPOUND--I WAS IN THE LEAD---
"--BUT IT WAS DANNY WHO TOOK OUT THE NEXT GUARD---
"I THINK NOW THAT HE WAS TRYING TO PROVE SOMETHING TO ME, THEN--
"--BUT WHAT IT WAS, I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND.
"WE TOOK THE ELEVATOR DOWN--AND DOWN--INTO SOLID BED-ROCK, I THINK--
"-- AND FINALLY--
THAT'S IT, BABE--PROJECT FOUR!
YOU GRAB THE GLOBE WHILE I COVER THESE CLOWNS--GOT IT, TASH?
DON'T WORRY, MISTER FRENCH.
I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.
"BUT AS I MOVED TOWARD THE STRANGELY GLOWING SPHERE--
NO--YOUNG WOMAN, I BEG YOU--DON'T TOUCH IT--
WE'RE DIRECTLY OVER A MAJOR FAULT AREA--!
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM, TASHA--
JUST TAKE THE GLOBE--- NICE 'N EASY--
--AN' THE REST OF YOU BIRDS, DON'T TRY AN--
I SAID NOT TO MOVE, OLD MAN!
DANNY, NO!
"BUT, I CALLED OUT TOO LATE---
=UNNNH!=
"--ALWAYS--TOO LATE.


"JUST BEFORE WE LEFT, DANNY THREW BACK A GAS CYLINDER--
"--I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A KNOCKOUT DRUG--"
-- BUT IT WASN'T. THE GAS WAS FATAL.
DANNY DIDN'T KNOW-- WE WERE DUPED, BOTH OF US, BY OUR SEPARATE COMMANDERS!
THAT WAS THE END OF FREE-LANCE SPYING FOR HIM-- AND ALMOST THE END FOR ME!
AND THE GLOBE? WHAT HAPPENED TO IT?
DANNY STILL HAS IT---
HE'S USED IT ONCE, FOR BLACKMAIL-- DURING THOSE EARTHQUAKES LAST YEAR.
MATT, I DON'T KNOW WHAT ITS POWER IS---
---BUT IT'S STRONGER THAN A DOZEN H-BOMBS!
AND THIS YOU DECIDED TO KEEP TO YOURSELF?
OKAY, HONEY-- NO QUESTIONS. MAYBE WE'D BETTER JUST PAY A VISIT ON' DARLIN' DANNY FRENCH---
--AND FIND OUT JUST WHAT HAPPY-BOY THINKS HE'S DOING-- AND WHY!
BUT SUDDENLY-- WITHOUT WARNING, WITHOUT ANTICIPATION--
NO--- WHAT ARE WE DOING? WE'RE-- WE'RE GOING TO GET KILLED!
WE--WE CAN'T TRY IT-- WE CAN'T!
MATT, IN HEAVEN'S NAME--
BUT MATT MURDOCK DOESN'T ANSWER--
INSTEAD, HE SEEMS TO CHOKE-- TO STRUGGLE FOR BREATH--
--AND IN A TERRIBLE MOMENT OF REVELATION---
--THE WIDOW KNOWS!
HE'S GOTTEN TO YOU, MATT-- IT'S DANNY--
HE'S CONTROLLING YOUR MIND! YOU'VE GOT TO TRY TO FIGHT IT---
--PLEASE, MATT--
20

PLEASE!
IT'S NO USE-- HE CAN'T EVEN HEAR ME---
--AND NOW I CAN'T-- CAN'T MOVE--! EVERYTHING'S SO FAR AWAY-- SO DISTANT!

MAAAAATT!
HER SCREAM ECHOES IN THE GREY CANYON WALLS--


--BUT TO THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL, HIS SENSES STIFLED BY THE TERROR COURSING INEXPLICABLY THROUGH HIS VEINS--
--THE SCREAM IS BUT A FAR-OFF WHISPER--
--LIKE THE RUSH-- OF PASSING WIND!
NEXT FEAR IS THE KEY!

DAREDEVIL
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91
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DAREDEVIL™
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
YOU HAVE KNOWN FEAR, MASKED MAN!
NOW, SHAKE HANDS WITH-- DEATH!!
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR BUT--
MR. FEAR!
BUT THAT'S ENOUGH!!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™

STAN LEE PRESENTS: A GERRY CONWAY/GENE COLAN SAN FRANCISCIAN FANTASY! TOM PALMER, INKER ARTIE SIMEK, LETTERER ROY THOMAS, EDITOR

FEAR IS THE KEY!
ONE MOMENT, HE'S DIVING--HIS BODY ARCING AT THE END OF A SNAPPED-TAUT BILLY CLUB WIRE--
--THE NEXT, SOMETHING HAPPENS TO THIS MAN-WITHOUT-FEAR--
--SOMETHING ATTACKS HIM FROM WITHIN--
--AN ICY SWORD SHOVED TWISTING INTO HIS GUT--BLINDING TERROR CUTTING THROUGH THE LAYERS OF HIS BRAIN--AND WITH ONE CHOKING SCREAM--
--HE FALLS!
MATT! NOOOOOOOOO!

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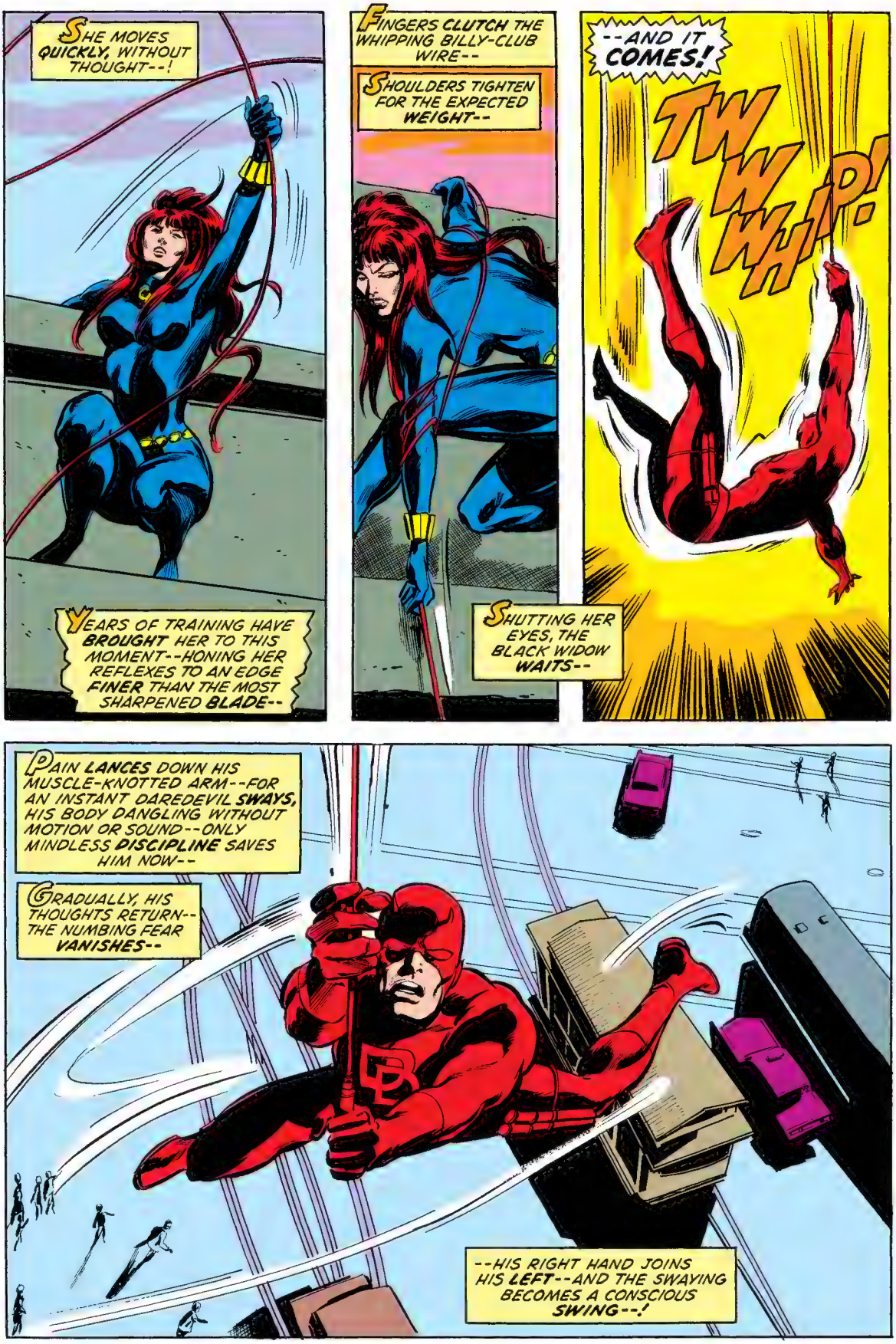
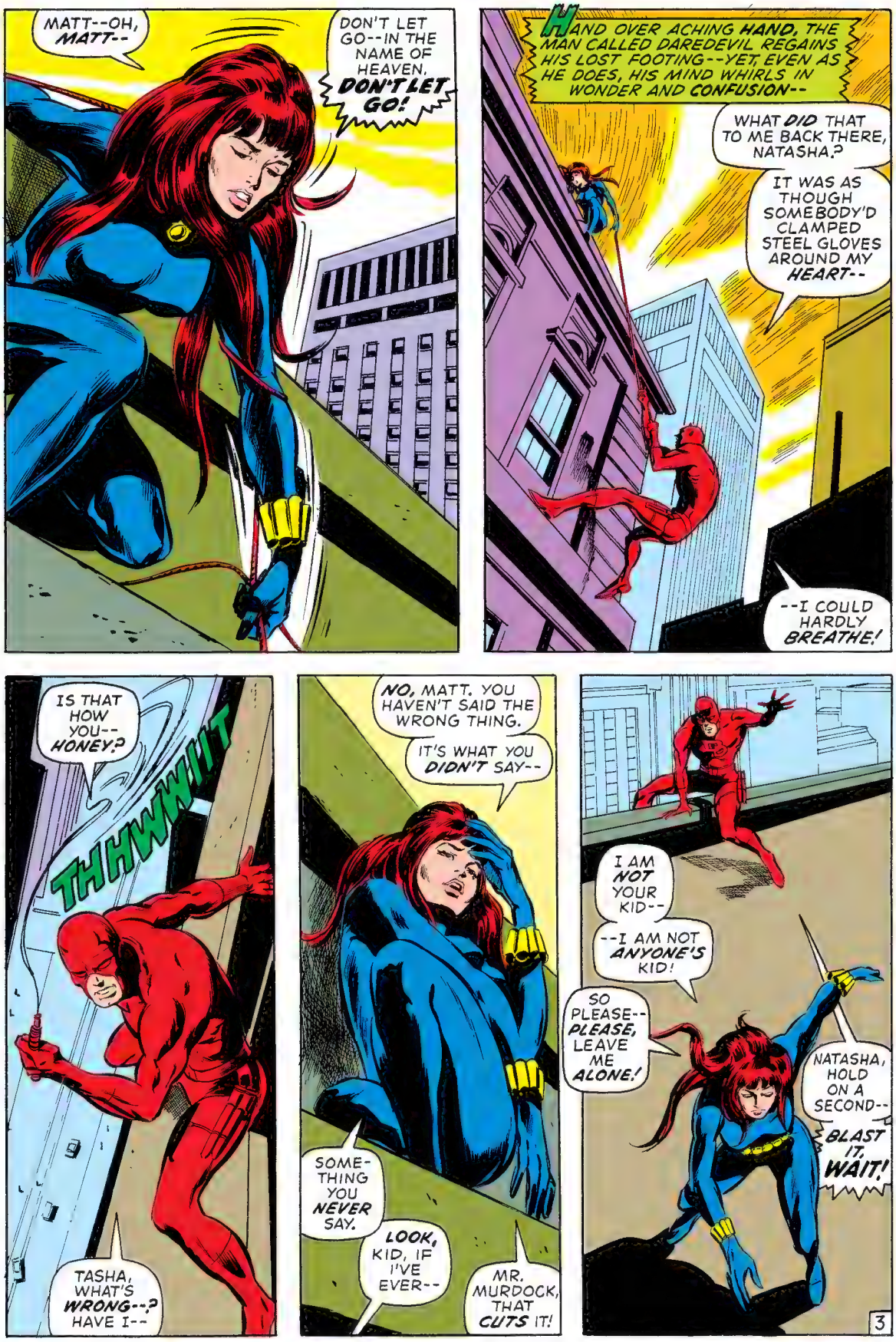
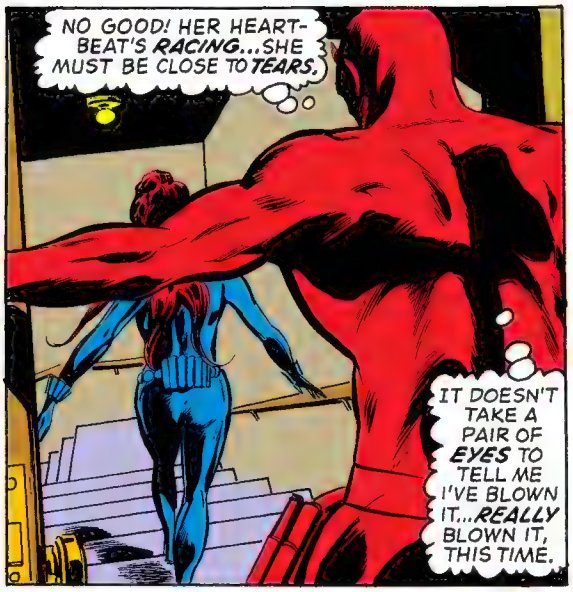
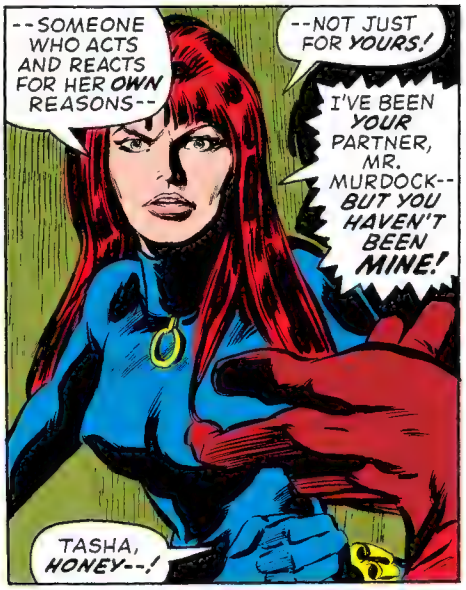

SHE MOVES QUICKLY, WITHOUT THOUGHT--!
YEARS OF TRAINING HAVE BROUGHT HER TO THIS MOMENT--HONING HER REFLEXES TO AN EDGE FINER THAN THE MOST SHARPENED BLADE--
FINGERS CLUTCH THE WHIPPING BILLY-CLUB WIRE--
SHOULDERS TIGHTEN FOR THE EXPECTED WEIGHT--
SHUTTING HER EYES, THE BLACK WIDOW WAITS--
--AND IT COMES!
TWWHIP!
PAIN LANCES DOWN HIS MUSCLE-KNOTTED ARM--FOR AN INSTANT DAREDEVIL SWAYS, HIS BODY DANGLING WITHOUT MOTION OR SOUND--ONLY MINDLESS DISCIPLINE SAVES HIM NOW--
GRADUALLY, HIS THOUGHTS RETURN--THE NUMBING FEAR VANISHES--
--HIS RIGHT HAND JOINS HIS LEFT--AND THE SWAYING BECOMES A CONSCIOUS SWING--!

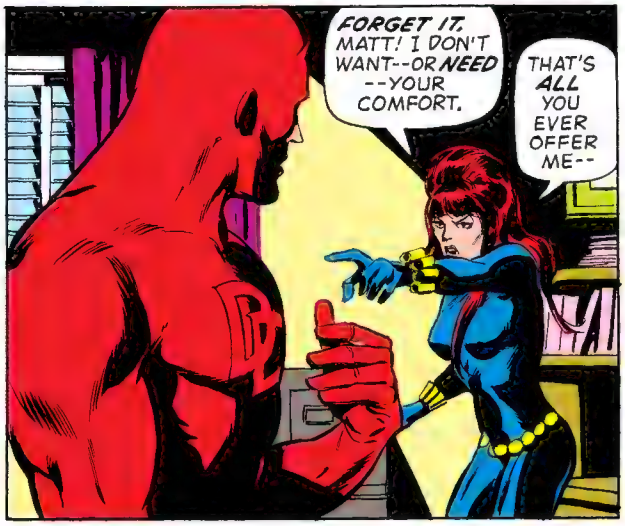

MATT--OH, MATT--
DON'T LET GO--IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN, DON'T LET GO!
HAND OVER ACHING HAND, THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL REGAINS HIS LOST FOOTING--YET, EVEN AS HE DOES, HIS MIND WHIRLS IN WONDER AND CONFUSION--
WHAT DID THAT TO ME BACK THERE, NATASHA?
IT WAS AS THOUGH SOMEBODY'D CLAMPED STEEL GLOVES AROUND MY HEART--
--I COULD HARDLY BREATHE!
IS THAT HOW YOU-- HONEY?
THHWWIT
TASHA, WHAT'S WRONG--? HAVE I--
NO, MATT. YOU HAVEN'T SAID THE WRONG THING.
IT'S WHAT YOU DIDN'T SAY--
SOME-THING YOU NEVER SAY.
LOOK, KID, IF I'VE EVER--
MR. MURDOCK, THAT CUTS IT!
I AM NOT YOUR KID--
--I AM NOT ANYONE'S KID!
SO PLEASE-- PLEASE, LEAVE ME ALONE!
NATASHA, HOLD ON A SECOND--
BLAST IT, WAIT!
3

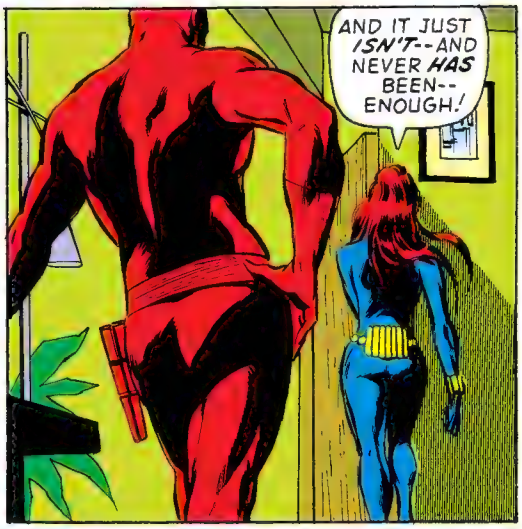

NO GOOD! HER HEART-BEAT'S RACING...SHE MUST BE CLOSE TO TEARS.
IT DOESN'T TAKE A PAIR OF EYES TO TELL ME I'VE BLOWN IT...REALLY BLOWN IT, THIS TIME.

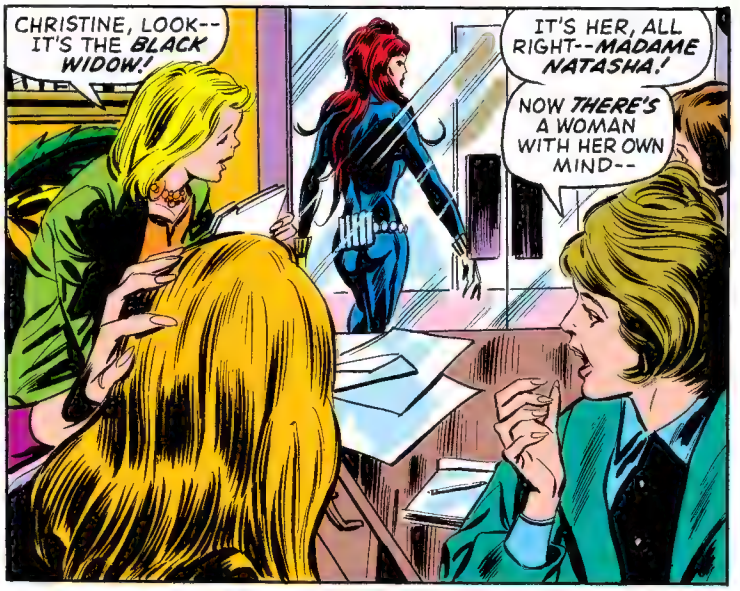
NATASHA...TALK TO ME.
...TELL ME WHAT I DID WRONG.
YOU HONESTLY DON'T UNDER-STAND, DO YOU?

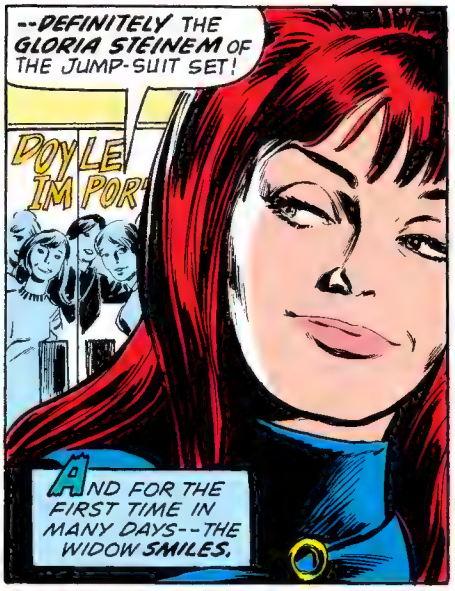
IT SUDDENLY STRUCK ME, MATT, THAT FOR THE PAST FEW WEEKS--I'VE BEEN YOUR PARTNER--
YOU NEVER THANK ME--NEVER ACCEPT ME FOR WHAT I AM--
--A PERSON--SOMEONE APART FROM YOU--

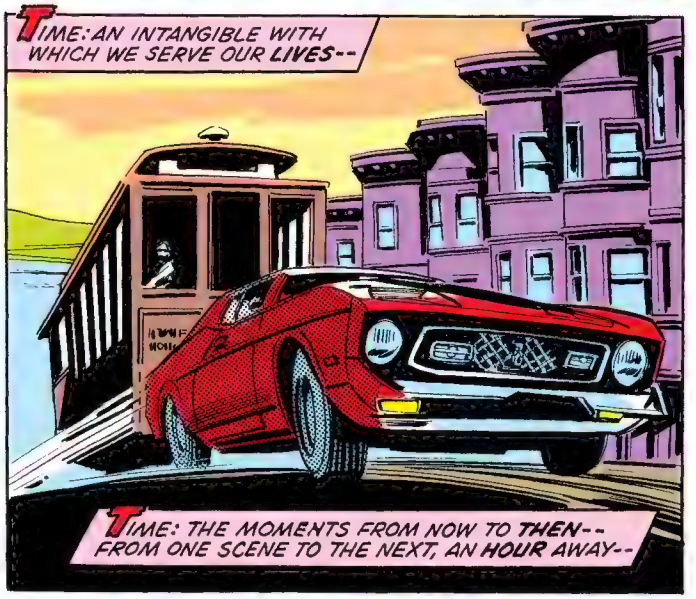

--SOMEONE WHO ACTS AND REACTS FOR HER OWN REASONS--
--NOT JUST FOR YOURS!
I'VE BEEN YOUR PARTNER, MR. MURDOCK--BUT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN MINE!
TASHA, HONEY--!

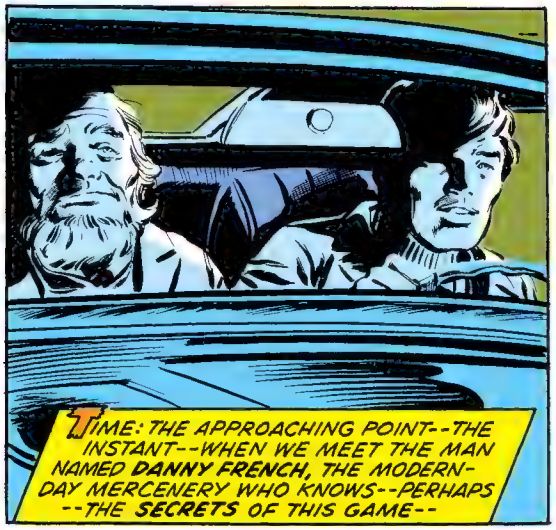

FORGET IT, MATT! I DON'T WANT--OR NEED --YOUR COMFORT.
THAT'S ALL YOU EVER OFFER ME--

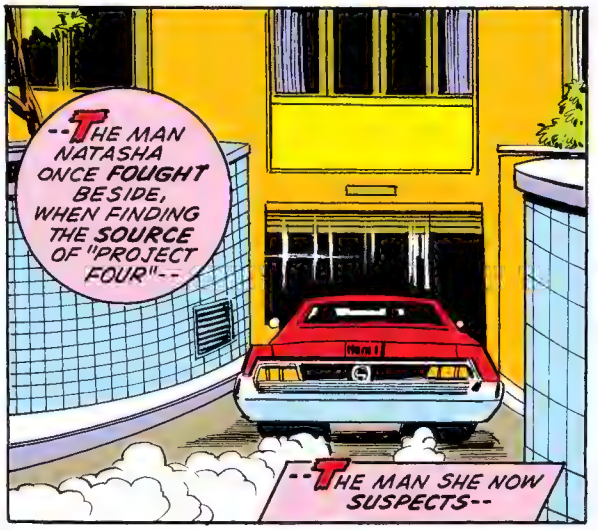

AND IT JUST ISN'T--AND NEVER HAS BEEN--ENOUGH!

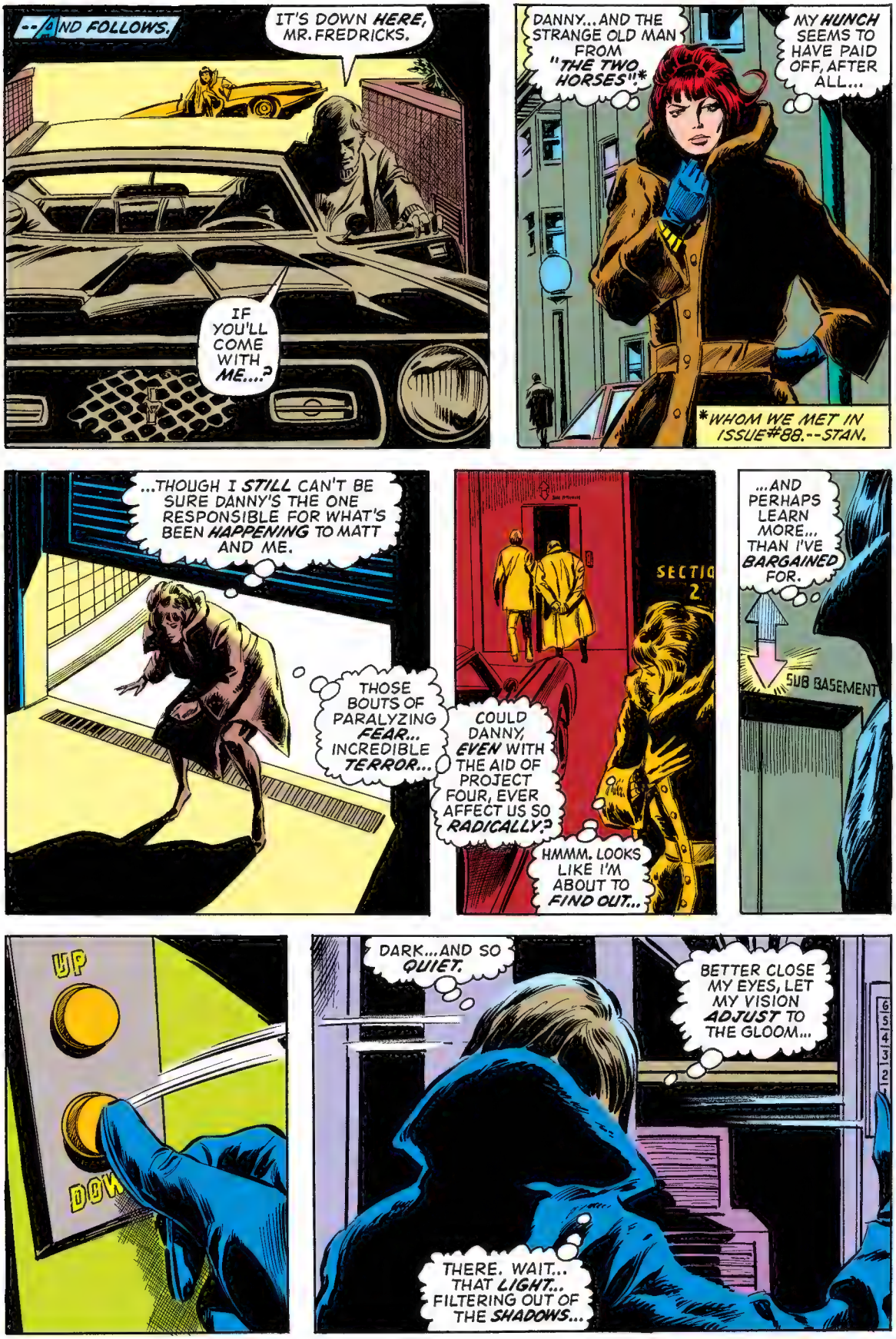

CHRISTINE, LOOK--IT'S THE BLACK WIDOW!
IT'S HER, ALL RIGHT--MADAME NATASHA!
NOW THERE'S A WOMAN WITH HER OWN MIND--


--DEFINITELY THE GLORIA STEINEM OF THE JUMP-SUIT SET!
AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY DAYS--THE WIDOW SMILES.


TIME: AN INTANGIBLE WITH WHICH WE SERVE OUR LIVES--
TIME: THE MOMENTS FROM NOW TO THEN--FROM ONE SCENE TO THE NEXT, AN HOUR AWAY--


TIME: THE APPROACHING POINT--THE INSTANT--WHEN WE MEET THE MAN NAMED DANNY FRENCH, THE MODERN-DAY MERCENERY WHO KNOWS--PERHAPS --THE SECRETS OF THIS GAME--


--THE MAN NATASHA ONCE FOUGHT BESIDE, WHEN FINDING THE SOURCE OF "PROJECT FOUR"--
--THE MAN SHE NOW SUSPECTS--


--AND FOLLOWS.
IT'S DOWN HERE, MR. FREDRICKS.
IF YOU'LL COME WITH ME...?
DANNY...AND THE STRANGE OLD MAN FROM "THE TWO HORSES"!*
MY HUNCH SEEMS TO HAVE PAID OFF, AFTER ALL...
*WHOM WE MET IN ISSUE#88.--STAN.
...THOUGH I STILL CAN'T BE SURE DANNY'S THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING TO MATT AND ME.
THOSE BOUTS OF PARALYZING FEAR... INCREDIBLE TERROR...
COULD DANNY, EVEN WITH THE AID OF PROJECT FOUR, EVER AFFECT US SO RADICALLY?
HMMM. LOOKS LIKE I'M ABOUT TO FIND OUT...
...AND PERHAPS LEARN MORE... THAN I'VE BARGAINED FOR.
SUB BASEMENT
UP
DOWN
DARK...AND SO QUIET.
BETTER CLOSE MY EYES, LET MY VISION ADJUST TO THE GLOOM...
THERE. WAIT... THAT LIGHT... FILTERING OUT OF THE SHADOWS...

ATTRACTED BY GREY LIGHT AND THE SOFT MURMUR OF VOICES, THE BLACK WIDOW MOVES FORWARD, HER PROGRESS CAT-LIKE, HER MIND CHURNING WITH HALF-REALIZED FEARS...
IS THIS ALL PART OF DANNY'S BLACKMAIL THREAT AGAINST HER--?

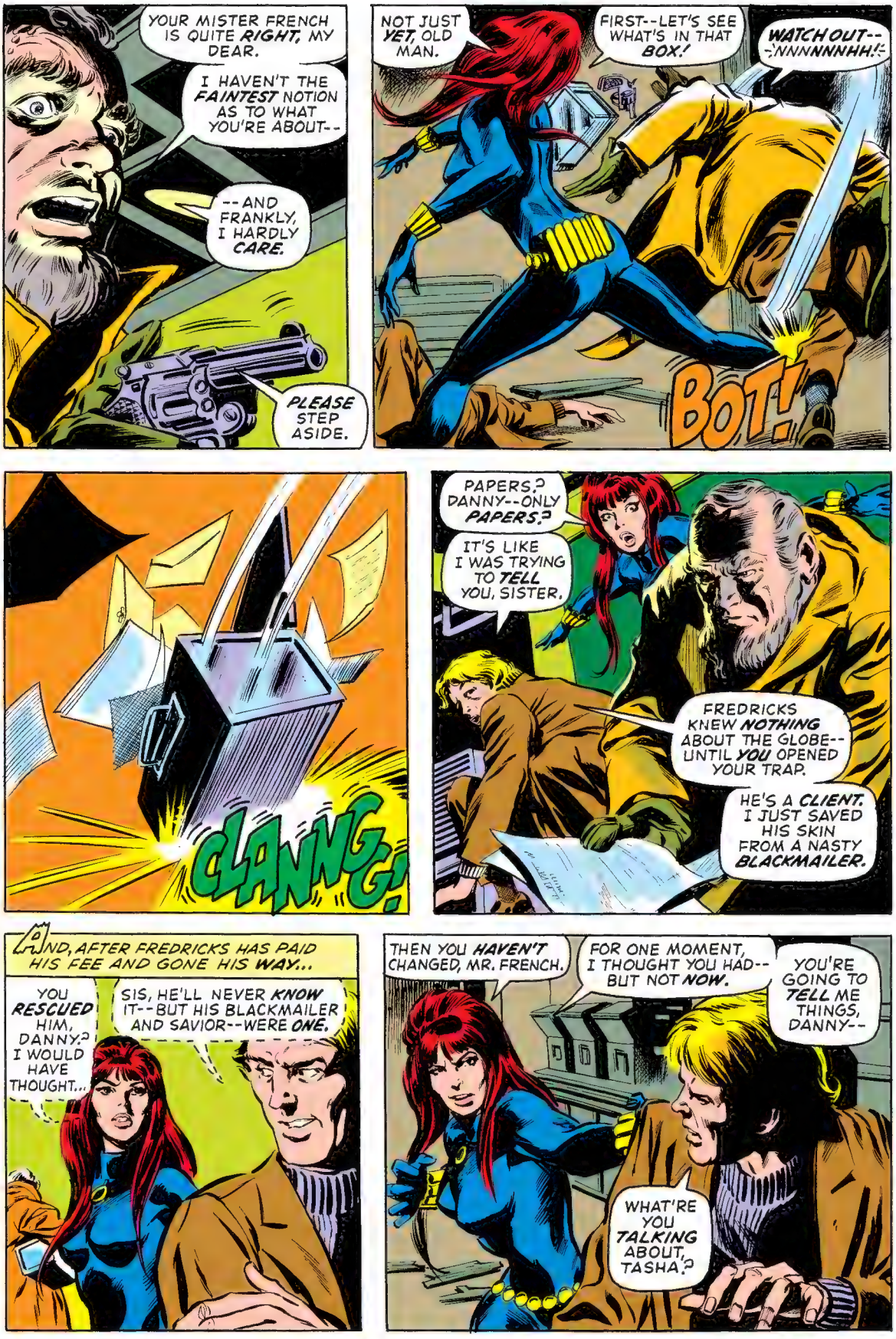
OR--IS THERE ANOTHER GAME AFOOT?
A GAME --WITH THE BLACK WIDOW'S LIFE AS THE WINNER'S PRIZE!

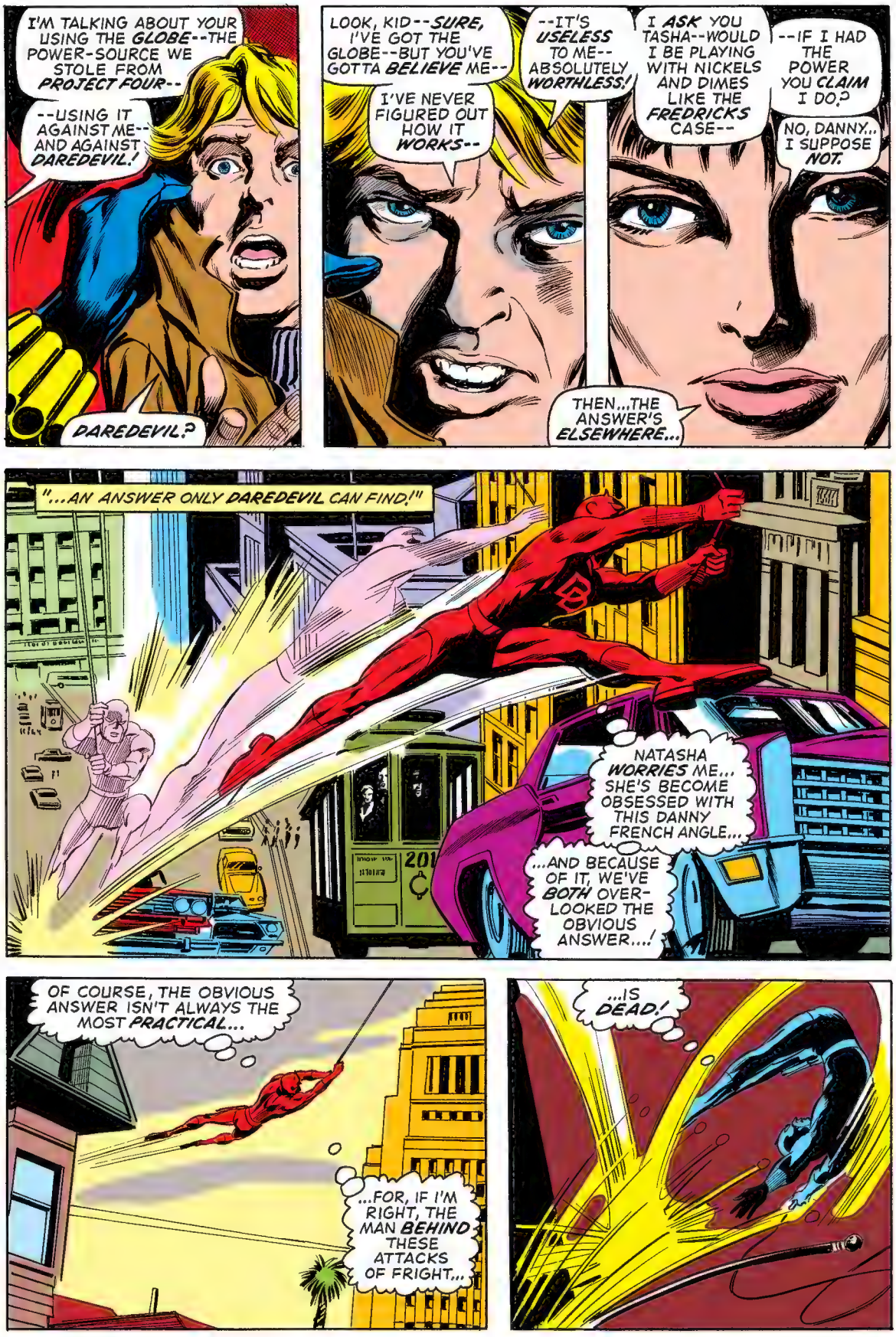
THERE Y'GO MR. FREDRICKS--JUST LIKE I PROMISED.
I THINK YOU'LL AGREE IT'S WORTH THE PRICE--
--WHICH I ASSUME YOU'VE GOT WITH YOU--RIGHT?
THE FULL AMOUNT, MR. FRENCH... PLUS A BONUS FOR YOUR PROMPT DELIVERY, I MIGHT ADD...!
NOW, DANNY--ISN'T THAT SWEET?

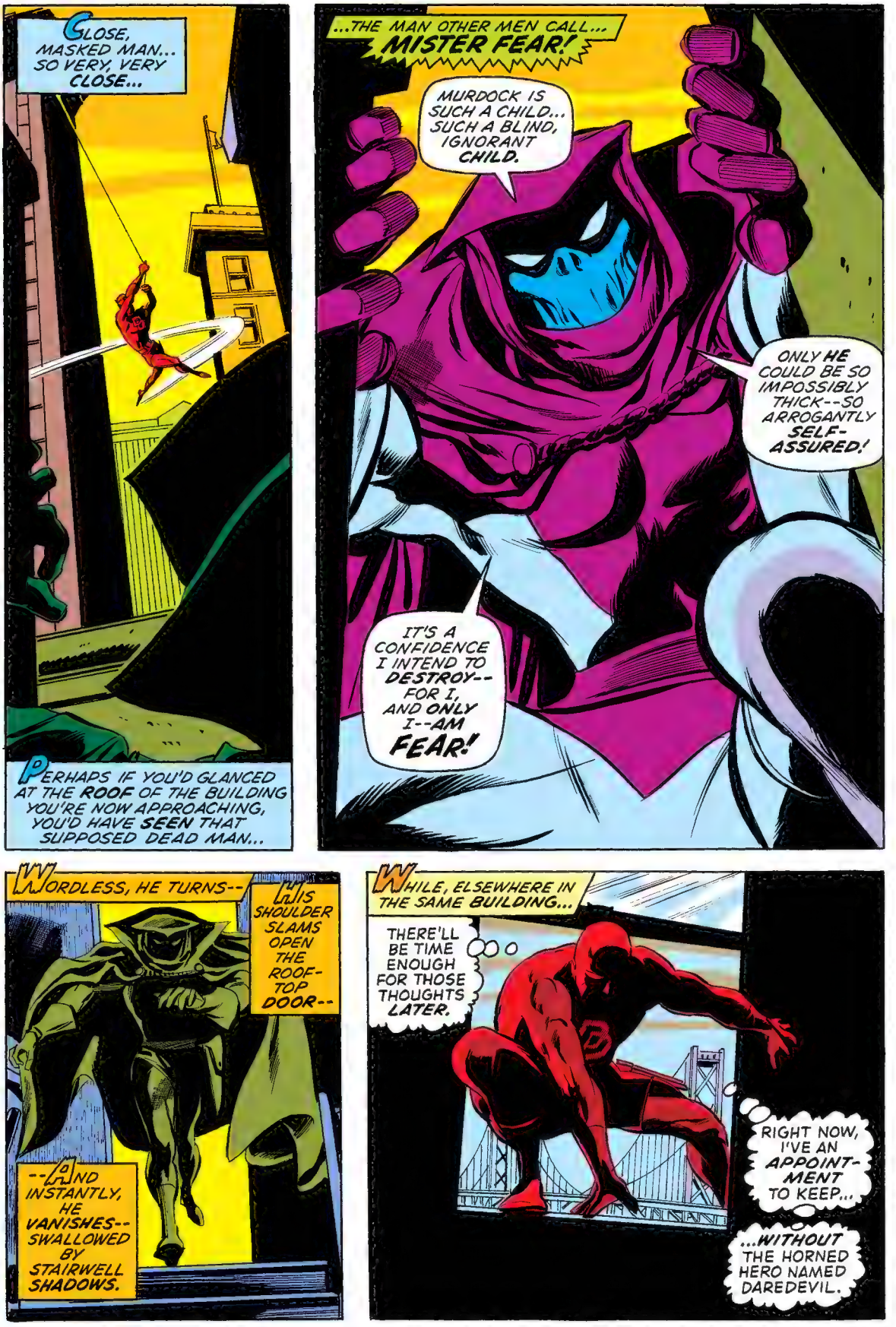
FRENCH--WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?
--THEY PAY EXTRA FOR TRAITORS THESE DAYS!
GO AHEAD, DANNY--EXPLAIN TO YOUR FRIEND.
TELL HIM ALL ABOUT THE PROJECT --AND THE POWER YOU'VE JUST SOLD!
LADY, I'VE HAD IT WITH YOU--

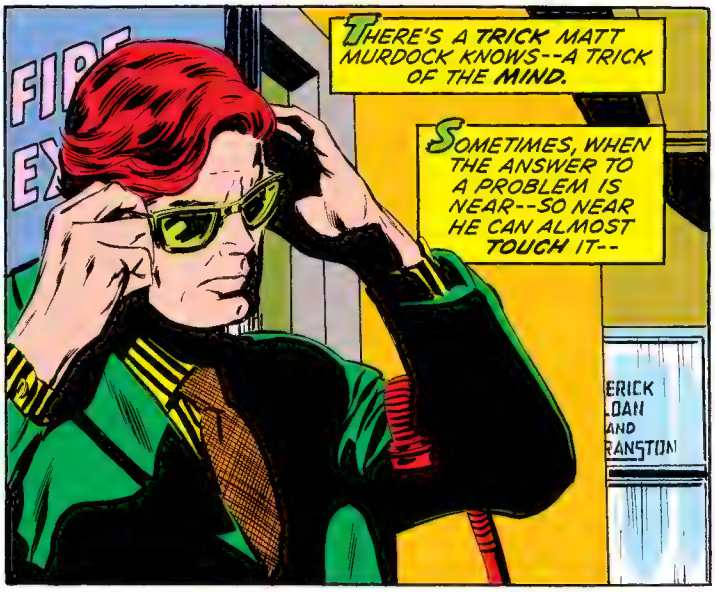
YOU'VE BEEN BUGGIN' ME ABOUT THAT PROJECT FOR THE PAST TWO WEEKS--
--FOLLOWING ME AROUND TOWN LIKE I'M SOME SORT OF CRIMINAL--
--MOUTHING OFF LIKE YOU'VE FLIPPED YOUR BLASTED LID--
--SISTER, I HAVE HAD ENOUGH!

DANNY, YOU'RE BREAKING MY HEART-- I MEAN THAT.
AFTER WHAT YOU'VE PUT ME THROUGH, IT MUST REALLY HURT YOU TO HAVE TO SAY ALL THAT--
--BUT IT ISN'T GOING TO HURT ONE HALF SO MUCH AS-- THIS!
FRAK!
Y-YOU'RE CRAZY-- YOU'RE REALLY CRAZY!
IF BY THAT YOU MEAN MAD--
--YOU BET I AM, MISTER FRENCH--
--AND THIS TIME, NOT ANY OF YOUR TRICKS--
WHAP!
--CAN SAVE YOU!
NOW LET'S SEE WHAT YOUR FRIEND HAS TO SAY--
--ABOUT A CERTAIN STOLEN ENERGY GLOBE.
NATASHA, YOU FOOL-- HE'S NOT--
:UMMPPHH!:

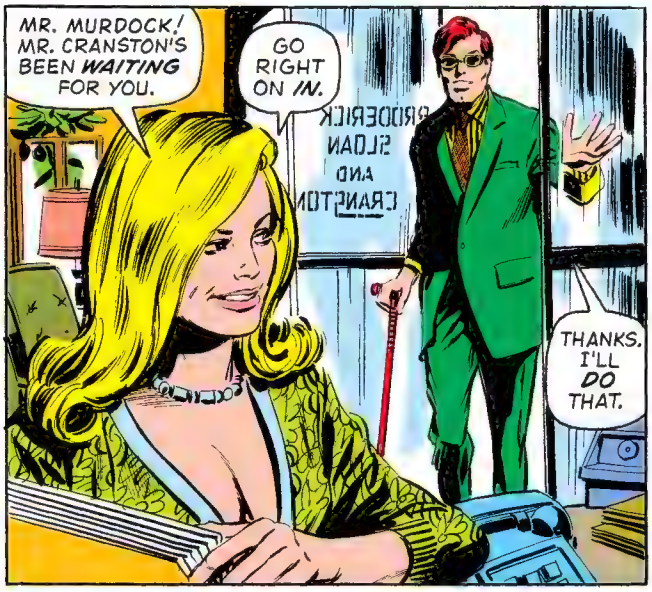

YOUR MISTER FRENCH IS QUITE RIGHT, MY DEAR.
I HAVEN'T THE FAINTEST NOTION AS TO WHAT YOU'RE ABOUT--
--AND FRANKLY, I HARDLY CARE.
PLEASE STEP ASIDE.
NOT JUST YET, OLD MAN.
FIRST--LET'S SEE WHAT'S IN THAT BOX!
WATCH OUT--
-NNNNNNHH!-
BOT!
CLANNG!
PAPERS,? DANNY--ONLY PAPERS.?
IT'S LIKE I WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU, SISTER.
FREDRICKS KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE GLOBE--UNTIL YOU OPENED YOUR TRAP.
HE'S A CLIENT. I JUST SAVED HIS SKIN FROM A NASTY BLACKMAILER.
AND, AFTER FREDRICKS HAS PAID HIS FEE AND GONE HIS WAY...
YOU RESCUED HIM, DANNY.? I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT...
SIS, HE'LL NEVER KNOW IT--BUT HIS BLACKMAILER AND SAVIOR--WERE ONE.
THEN YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED, MR. FRENCH.
FOR ONE MOMENT, I THOUGHT YOU HAD--BUT NOT NOW.
YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME THINGS, DANNY--
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT, TASHA.?


I'M TALKING ABOUT YOUR USING THE GLOBE--THE POWER-SOURCE WE STOLE FROM PROJECT FOUR--
--USING IT AGAINST ME--AND AGAINST DAREDEVIL!
DAREDEVIL?
LOOK, KID--SURE, I'VE GOT THE GLOBE--BUT YOU'VE GOTTA BELIEVE ME--
I'VE NEVER FIGURED OUT HOW IT WORKS--
--IT'S USELESS TO ME--ABSOLUTELY WORTHLESS!
I ASK YOU TASHA--WOULD I BE PLAYING WITH NICKELS AND DIMES LIKE THE FREDRICKS CASE--
--IF I HAD THE POWER YOU CLAIM I DO?
NO, DANNY... I SUPPOSE NOT.
THEN...THE ANSWER'S ELSEWHERE...
"...AN ANSWER ONLY DAREDEVIL CAN FIND!"
NATASHA WORRIES ME... SHE'S BECOME OBSESSED WITH THIS DANNY FRENCH ANGLE...
...AND BECAUSE OF IT, WE'VE BOTH OVER-LOOKED THE OBVIOUS ANSWER...!
OF COURSE, THE OBVIOUS ANSWER ISN'T ALWAYS THE MOST PRACTICAL...
...FOR, IF I'M RIGHT, THE MAN BEHIND THESE ATTACKS OF FRIGHT...
...IS DEAD!

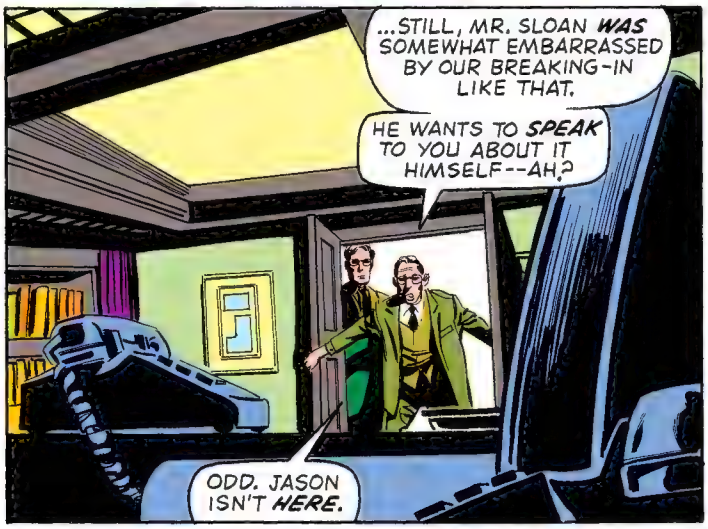

CLOSE, MASKED MAN... SO VERY, VERY CLOSE...
PERHAPS IF YOU'D GLANCED AT THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING YOU'RE NOW APPROACHING, YOU'D HAVE SEEN THAT SUPPOSED DEAD MAN...
...THE MAN OTHER MEN CALL... MISTER FEAR!
MURDOCK IS SUCH A CHILD... SUCH A BLIND, IGNORANT CHILD.
ONLY HE COULD BE SO IMPOSSIBLY THICK--SO ARROGANTLY SELF-ASSURED!
IT'S A CONFIDENCE I INTEND TO DESTROY--FOR I, AND ONLY I--AM FEAR!
WORDLESS, HE TURNS--
HIS SHOULDER SLAMS OPEN THE ROOF-TOP DOOR--
--AND INSTANTLY, HE VANISHES--SWALLOWED BY STAIRWELL SHADOWS.
WHILE, ELSEWHERE IN THE SAME BUILDING...
THERE'LL BE TIME ENOUGH FOR THOSE THOUGHTS LATER.
RIGHT NOW, I'VE AN APPOINT-MENT TO KEEP...
...WITHOUT THE HORNED HERO NAMED DAREDEVIL.


THERE'S A TRICK MATT MURDOCK KNOWS--A TRICK OF THE MIND.
SOMETIMES, WHEN THE ANSWER TO A PROBLEM IS NEAR--SO NEAR HE CAN ALMOST TOUCH IT--

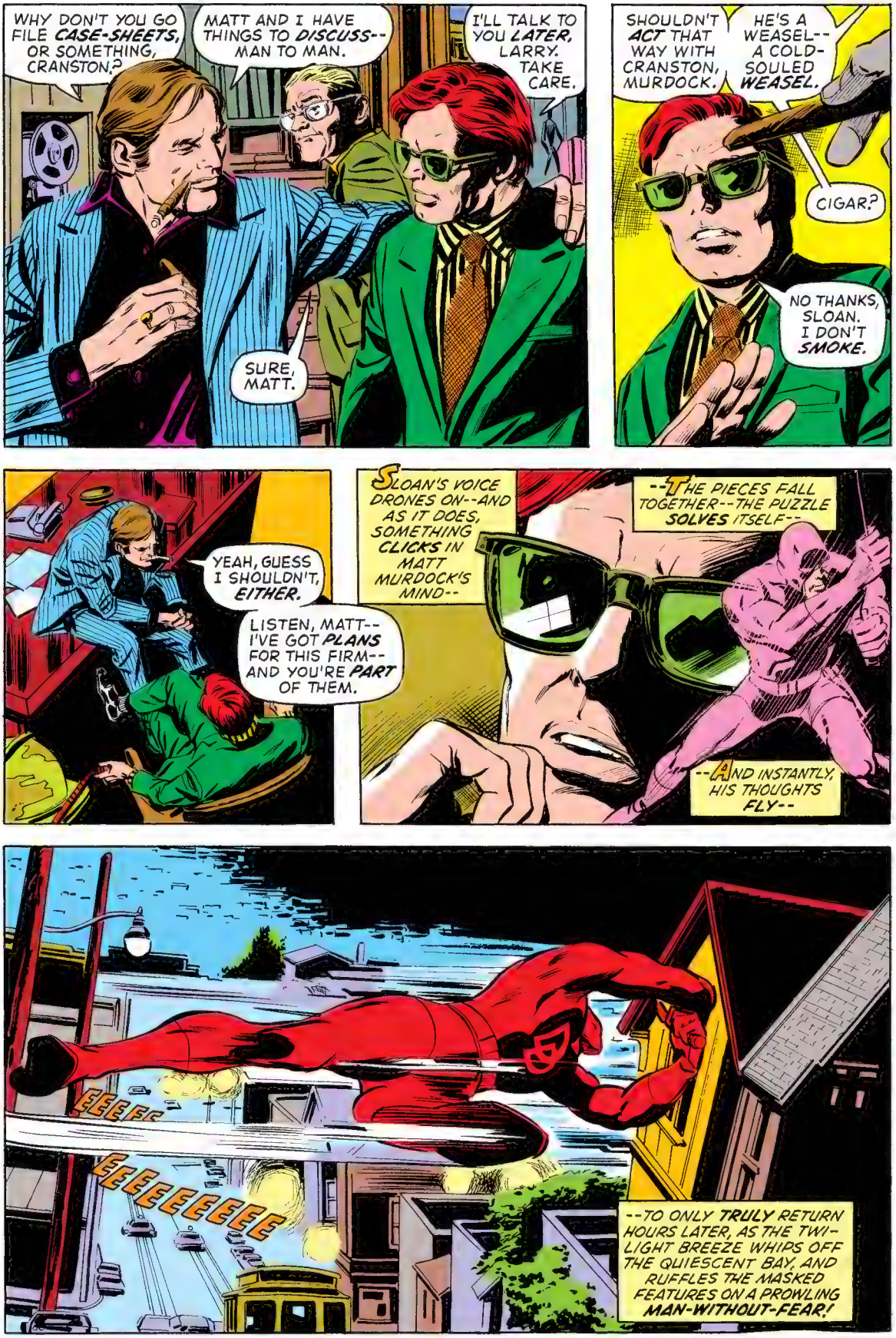
--HE SETS THAT PROBLEM ASIDE-- AND LETS HIS SUB-CONSCIOUS FILE THE CLUES AND EQUATIONS--
--UNTIL THE ANSWER FINDS ITSELF--
--SOMETIMES, AN ANSWER UNEXPECTED.

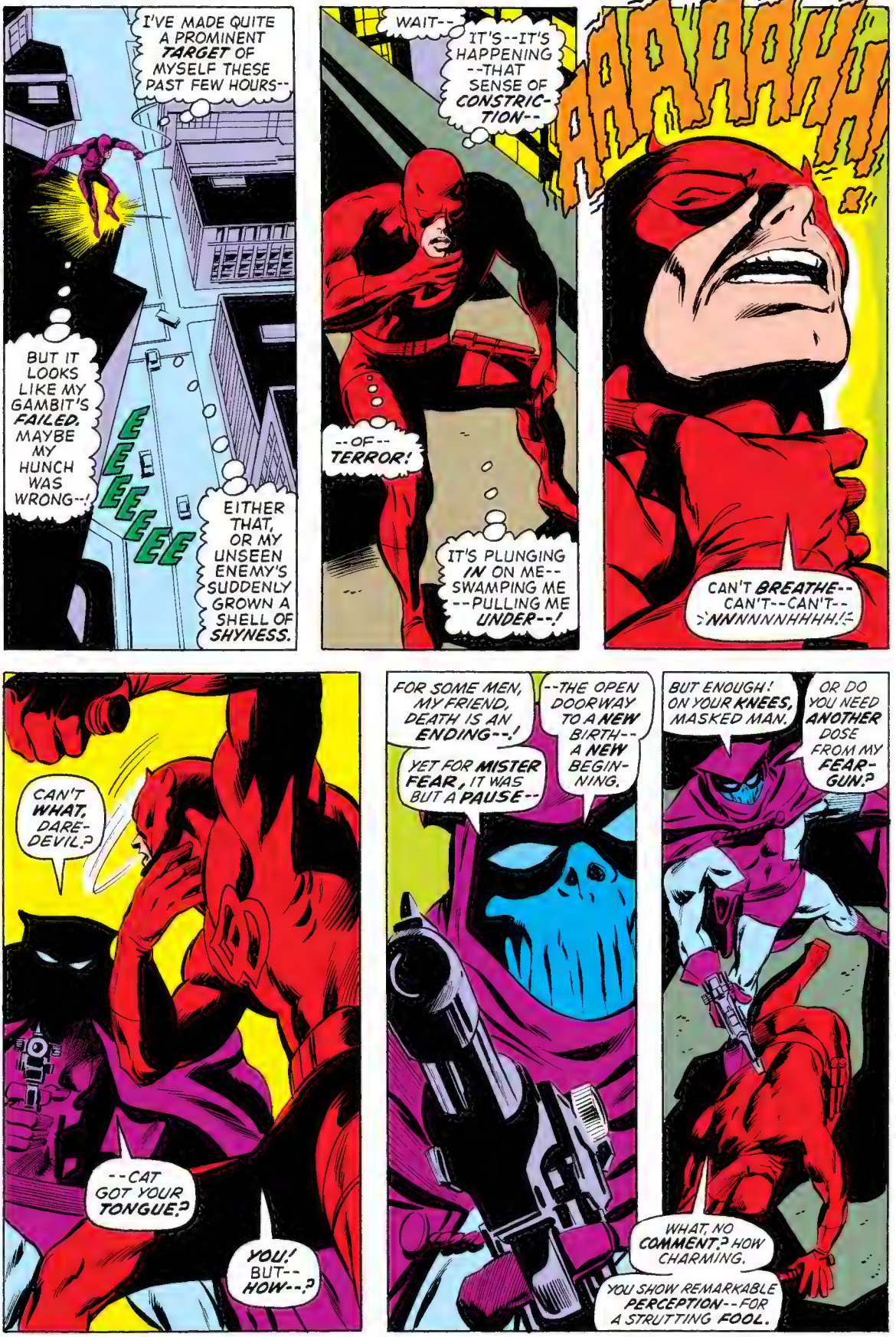

MR. MURDOCK! MR. CRANSTON'S BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.
GO RIGHT ON IN.
THANKS. I'LL DO THAT.

AH, MATT--GOOD TO--AH--SEE YOU AGAIN.
AWFULLY SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT--
FORGET IT, LARRY.
WHAT'S ONE INTRUSION BETWEEN OLD LAW-SCHOOL CLASS-MATES?
AH... AH, YES...

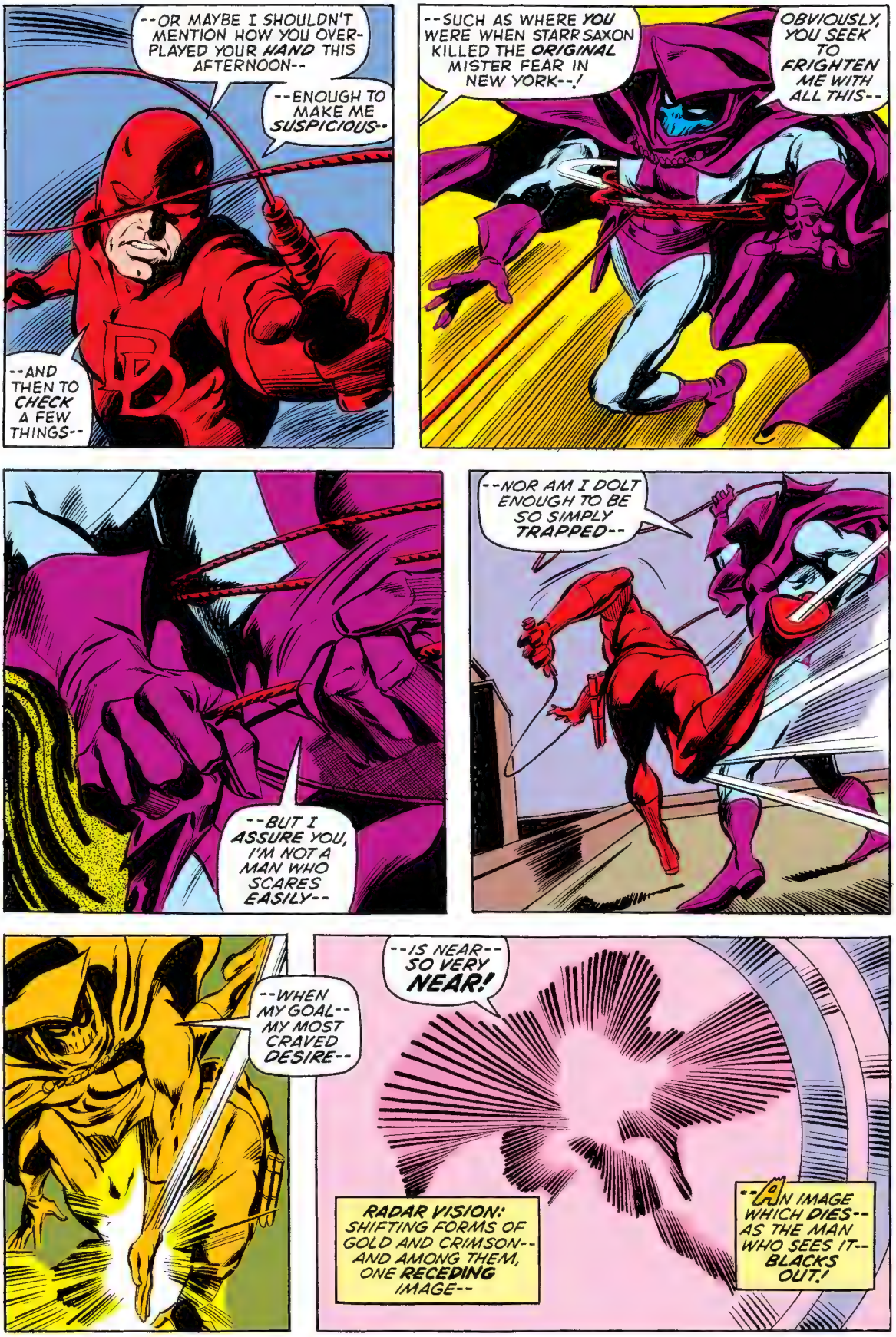

...STILL, MR. SLOAN WAS SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED BY OUR BREAKING-IN LIKE THAT.
HE WANTS TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT IT HIMSELF--AH?
ODD. JASON ISN'T HERE.

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, CRANSTON...
JUST STEPPED OUT FOR A CIGAR. YOU UNDERSTAND, EH, MURDOCK?


WHY DON'T YOU GO FILE CASE-SHEETS, OR SOMETHING, CRANSTON?
MATT AND I HAVE THINGS TO DISCUSS-- MAN TO MAN.
I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER, LARRY. TAKE CARE.
SURE, MATT.
SHOULDN'T ACT THAT WAY WITH CRANSTON, MURDOCK.
HE'S A WEASEL-- A COLD-SOULED WEASEL.
CIGAR?
NO THANKS, SLOAN. I DON'T SMOKE.
YEAH, GUESS I SHOULDN'T, EITHER.
LISTEN, MATT-- I'VE GOT PLANS FOR THIS FIRM-- AND YOU'RE PART OF THEM.
SLOAN'S VOICE DRONES ON--AND AS IT DOES, SOMETHING CLICKS IN MATT MURDOCK'S MIND--
--THE PIECES FALL TOGETHER--THE PUZZLE SOLVES ITSELF--
--AND INSTANTLY, HIS THOUGHTS FLY--
EEEEEEEEEE
--TO ONLY TRULY RETURN HOURS LATER, AS THE TWILIGHT BREEZE WHIPS OFF THE QUIESCENT BAY, AND RUFFLES THE MASKED FEATURES ON A PROWLING MAN-WITHOUT-FEAR!


I'VE MADE QUITE A PROMINENT TARGET OF MYSELF THESE PAST FEW HOURS--
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE MY GAMBIT'S FAILED. MAYBE MY HUNCH WAS WRONG--!
EEEEEEE
EITHER THAT, OR MY UNSEEN ENEMY'S SUDDENLY GROWN A SHELL OF SHYNESS.
WAIT--
IT'S--IT'S HAPPENING --THAT SENSE OF CONSTRICTION--
--OF-- TERROR!
IT'S PLUNGING IN ON ME-- SWAMPING ME --PULLING ME UNDER--!
AAAAAHH!
CAN'T BREATHE-- CAN'T--CAN'T-- NNNNNNHHHH!
CAN'T WHAT, DAREDEVIL?
--CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE?
YOU! BUT-- HOW--?
FOR SOME MEN, MY FRIEND, DEATH IS AN ENDING--!
YET FOR MISTER FEAR, IT WAS BUT A PAUSE--
--THE OPEN DOORWAY TO A NEW BIRTH-- A NEW BEGINNING.
BUT ENOUGH! ON YOUR KNEES, MASKED MAN.
OR DO YOU NEED ANOTHER DOSE FROM MY FEAR-GUN?
WHAT, NO COMMENT? HOW CHARMING.
YOU SHOW REMARKABLE PERCEPTION--FOR A STRUTTING FOOL.

DID I HEAR YOU MENTION PERCEPTION, MR. FEAR?
PERHAPS YOU'D BETTER ADD FORESIGHT TO THAT APPRAISAL--
--THE KIND OF FORE-SIGHT WHICH MADE ME GUESS IT WAS YOU--
--AND PREPARE THIS HANDY GASEOUS ANTI-DOTE TO YOUR FEAR-INDUCING PELLETS.
NOW, MISTER FEAR-- WHOEVER YOU ARE--
--IT'S MY TURN!
:UMMMPPH!:
STILL A FOOL, MURDOCK--
--A GRACELESS, INCOMPETENT IDIOT!
DID YOU THINK TO CATCH ME UNAWARES WITH THAT PITIABLE PLOY?
IF SO-- YOU'VE FAILED, MY FRIEND-- AND FAILED MISERABLY!
SO WHO'S PERFECT?
YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY FAULTLESS EITHER, SKULL-FACE.


--OR MAYBE I SHOULDN'T MENTION HOW YOU OVER-PLAYED YOUR HAND THIS AFTERNOON--
--ENOUGH TO MAKE ME SUSPICIOUS--
--AND THEN TO CHECK A FEW THINGS--
--SUCH AS WHERE YOU WERE WHEN STARR SAXON KILLED THE ORIGINAL MISTER FEAR IN NEW YORK--!
OBVIOUSLY, YOU SEEK TO FRIGHTEN ME WITH ALL THIS--
--BUT I ASSURE YOU, I'M NOT A MAN WHO SCARES EASILY--
--NOR AM I DOLT ENOUGH TO BE SO SIMPLY TRAPPED--
--WHEN MY GOAL-- MY MOST CRAVED DESIRE--
--IS NEAR-- SO VERY NEAR!
RADAR VISION: SHIFTING FORMS OF GOLD AND CRIMSON-- AND AMONG THEM, ONE RECEDING IMAGE--
--AN IMAGE WHICH DIES-- AS THE MAN WHO SEES IT-- BLACKS OUT!

SOON...
AND SO-- IT IS DONE.
THE FIRST CONFRONTATION IS FINISHED-- AND IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS, THE SECOND WILL BEGIN.
WHEN BOTH MEN FALL-- THE WEIGHT OF HATRED WILL BE LIFTED--
--AND FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE, I'LL BE FREE OF THEIR TORMENT--
--I'LL BE FREE!
DREAM ON, SKULL-FACE.
FROM WHAT I HEAR, PRISONS AREN'T MUCH ON FREEDOM THESE DAYS--
--SO GET SET FOR A SHOCK.
MURDOCK!
APPARENTLY, I MISJUDGED YOUR CONDITION--
--AND YOUR KNOWLEDGE! WELL, OLD FRIEND-- I'VE MADE MISTAKES BEFORE, SUCH AS LETTING YOU LIVE--
BUT I SWEAR TO YOU--
--IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!
-UNNNH- HE'S STRONGER THAN I'D IMAGINED--
--AND--I'M STILL WEAK, TIRED-- HOURS WITHOUT SLEEP--!
CAN'T-- BREAK HIS GRIP--!

WHEN, AS A DEEPER DARKNESS THAN THE ONE HE'S LIVED WITH FOR HALF HIS LIFE BEGINS TO FLOOD THE MIND OF THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL--
--DESTINY INTERVENES-- IN THE FORM OF AN OPENING DOOR--
WHAT--? NO-- NOT YET, NOT NOW--!
--AND THE SUDDEN SWIPE OF A GRASPING HAND!
WHAT'S WRONG, LARRY? AFRAID SLOAN WILL SEE YOU--
--AND REALIZE-- YOU'RE MISTER FEAR--
CRANSTON? FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, MAN--WHAT IS ALL THIS?
THAT RIDICULOUS COSTUME--IF YOU'VE ASKED ME UP HERE TO PARTICIPATE IN SOME SORT OF JOKE--!
SLOAN-- HAVEN'T YOU GUESSED YET? DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND?
IT'S YOU I LOATHE-- YOU, AND ALL YOUR FILTHY KIND!
THE GRANDSTANDERS-- THE GLORY-SEEKERS --THE THIEVES WHO TAKE THE PRAISE WHILE I DO ALL THE WORK!
YOU WONDER WHY I ASKED YOU HERE? TO KILL YOU, SLOAN--
--TO SEE YOU DEAD!

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, CRANSTON--
--BUT I JUST CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT.
MRRRMMPPHFF!
HMMM. BAD MOVE, MATTHEW--ANOTHER MOMENT, AND LARRY WILL SPILL THE BEANS--
--AND YOUR SECRET IDENTITY IS GONE.
SO--YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE A NAP, JASON.
--AND WHILE YOU'RE SLEEPING, YOUR ERSTWHILE PARTNER AND I WILL HAVE A LITTLE TALK!
YOU--YOU KNEW ALL ALONG--!
EVER SINCE THIS AFTERNOON, LARRY--
--YOU WERE OUT OF BREATH, PANTING--
--AND SOMETHING ELSE--THE RATHER DISTINCTIVE ODOR OF FEAR-GAS.
DISTINCTIVE TO ME, AT ANY RATE.
NOW, LAR: HOW'D YOU GET IT?
I--I WAS IN NEW YORK --AT-- AT A HOTEL--
"I HEARD A SOUND FROM THE ROOM ACROSS THE HALL--VOICES ARGUING. A DOOR WAS OPEN--I LOOKED IN, AND SAW A MAN CALLED STARR SAXON SHOOT ANOTHER MAN--
BKOW
"--ZOLTAN DRAGO, THE ORIGINAL MISTER FEAR."
"DRAGO LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO TELL ME WHERE HE'D HIDDEN HIS COSTUME AND EQUIPMENT--HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BUY HIS LIFE--
"UNFORTUNATELY, IT WASN'T MINE TO GIVE. HE DIED AS I HELD HIM."
*DRAGO DIED IN DD #54.--S.

BUT WHY DID YOU DO ALL THIS, LARRY?
WHEN MATT MURDOCK MOVED TO SAN FRANCISCO WITH MADAME NATASHA--AND DAREDEVIL WITH THE BLACK WIDOW--
AND HOW DID YOU KNOW--
IT WASN'T HARD.
AND--I'VE ALWAYS DESPISED YOU, MURDOCK.
IN SCHOOL, IT WAS ALWAYS-- MURDOCK THIS, MURDOCK THAT--
--AND I TELL YOU, I'D HAD ENOUGH!
KRAK!
I'LL BE BACK, MY FRIEND--
--AND WHEN I RETURN, I WILL DESTROY YOU!
LARRY, WAIT--YOUR JETS, MAN-- YOU DON'T HAVE--
--YOUR JETS.
AAAAAGGH
AND WHEN IT IS OVER, HE STANDS-- LISTENING--BUT THERE'S NO SOUND. THERE'S ONLY THE ECHO--OF LARRY CRANSTON'S SCREAM.
HOURS PASS...LONG HOURS OF AIMLESS WANDERING, UNTIL...
IVAN...? THIS IS MATT.
DON'T ASK ME WHERE I'VE BEEN. I CAN'T TELL YOU... I'M NOT REALLY SURE.
COULD YOU PUT TASHA ON? I'VE GOT TO TALK TO HER--
SORRY, MURDOCK-- THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET THROUGH TO YOU.
THE KID'S GONE! AND THIS TIME, PAL, I'VE GOT A FEELING SHE'S SPLIT-- FOR GOOD!
NEXT: MANHUNT!

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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20¢
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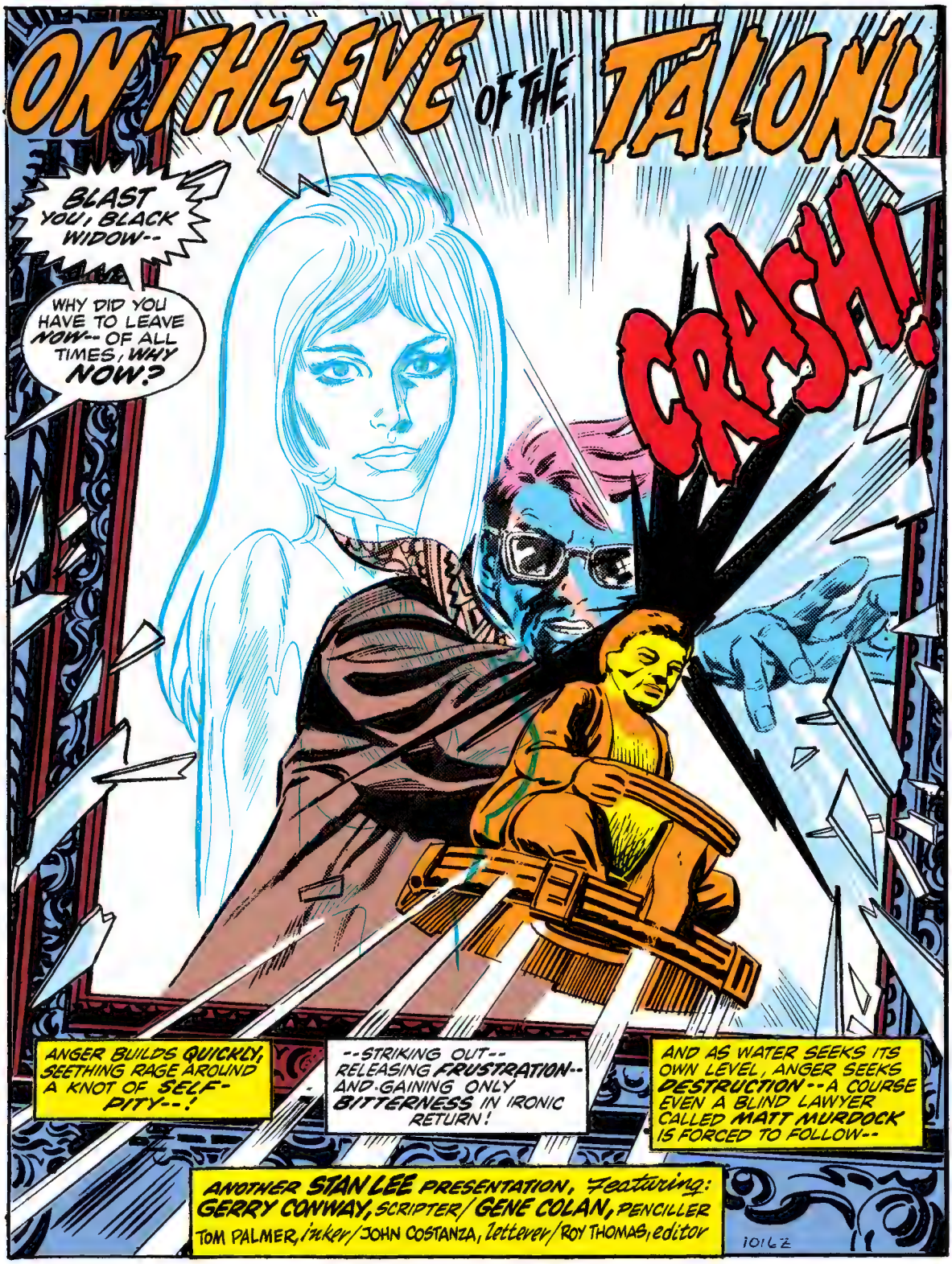
DAREDEVIL®
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW™
KEEP AWAY FROM THE MASKED MAN! ONE MORE BLOW--WOULD KILL HIM!
MATT--STAY BACK! THIS IS THE WIDOW'S SHOW!
WHAT'S GOING ON? MATT MURDOCK RUSHING TO SAVE THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR? DON'T MISS...
THE BLUE TALON STRIKES!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™


ON THE EVE OF THE TALON!
BLAST YOU, BLACK WIDOW--
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO LEAVE NOW-- OF ALL TIMES, WHY NOW?
CRASH!
ANGER BUILDS QUICKLY, SEETHING RAGE AROUND A KNOT OF SELF-PITY--!
--STRIKING OUT-- RELEASING FRUSTRATION-- AND GAINING ONLY BITTERNESS IN IRONIC RETURN!
AND AS WATER SEEKS ITS OWN LEVEL, ANGER SEEKS DESTRUCTION--A COURSE EVEN A BLIND LAWYER CALLED MATT MURDOCK IS FORCED TO FOLLOW--
ANOTHER STAN LEE PRESENTATION, Featuring: GERRY CONWAY, SCRIPTER/ GENE COLAN, PENCILLER
TOM PALMER, Inker/ JOHN COSTANZA, Letterer/ ROY THOMAS, editor
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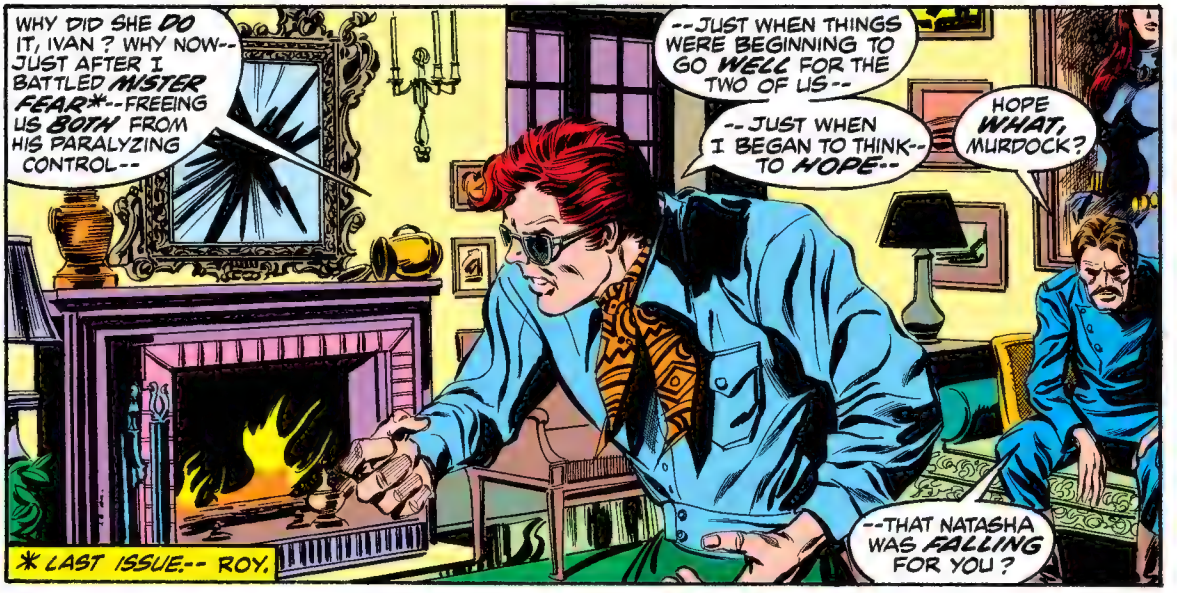
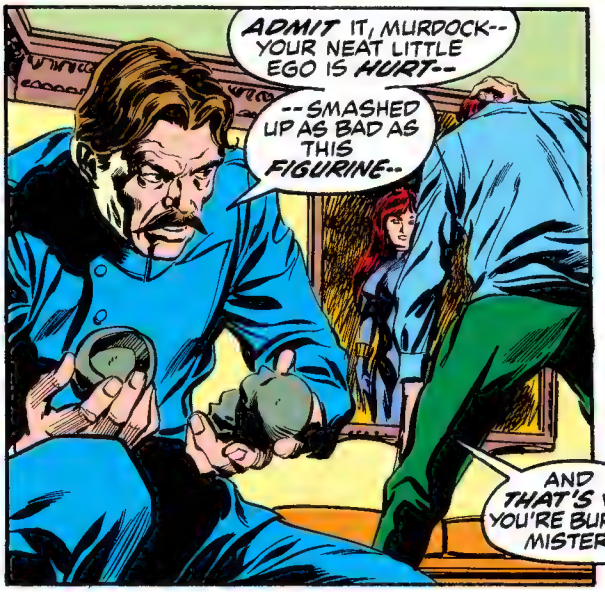
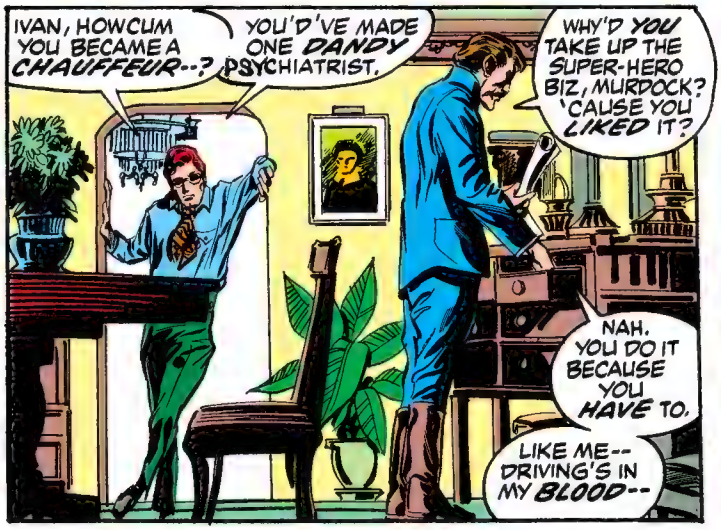
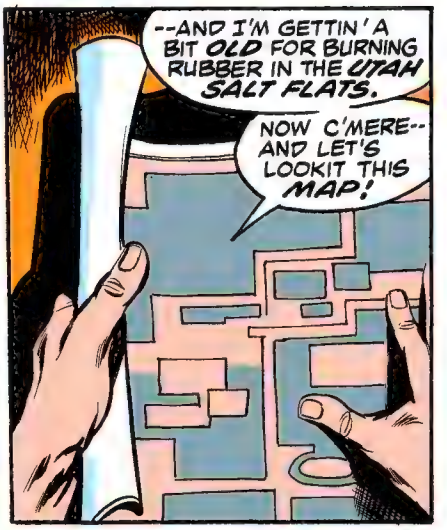

WHY DID SHE DO IT, IVAN? WHY NOW--JUST AFTER I BATTLED MISTER FEAR*--FREEING US BOTH FROM HIS PARALYZING CONTROL--
--JUST WHEN THINGS WERE BEGINNING TO GO WELL FOR THE TWO OF US--
--JUST WHEN I BEGAN TO THINK--TO HOPE--
HOPE WHAT, MURDOCK?
--THAT NATASHA WAS FALLING FOR YOU?
*LAST ISSUE.-- ROY.

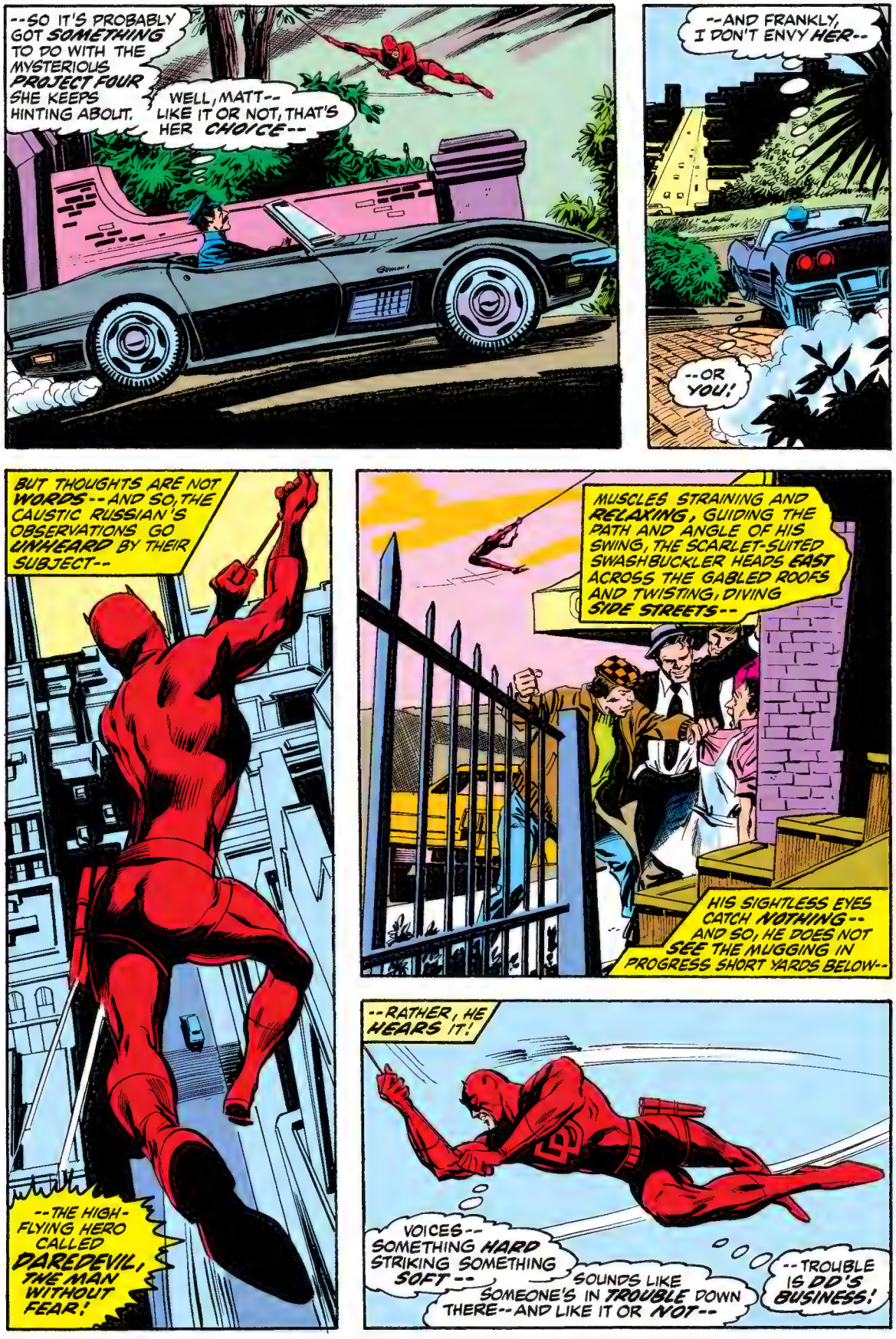

ADMIT IT, MURDOCK--YOUR NEAT LITTLE EGO IS HURT--
--SMASHED UP AS BAD AS THIS FIGURINE--
AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE BURNING, MISTER--

--'CAUSE IF YOU REALLY CARED ABOUT 'TASHA YOU'D BE OUT LOOKIN' FOR HER--
--INSTEAD'A BUSTIN' UP THIS PLACE LIKE SOME SORTA LOVE-SICK PUNK.

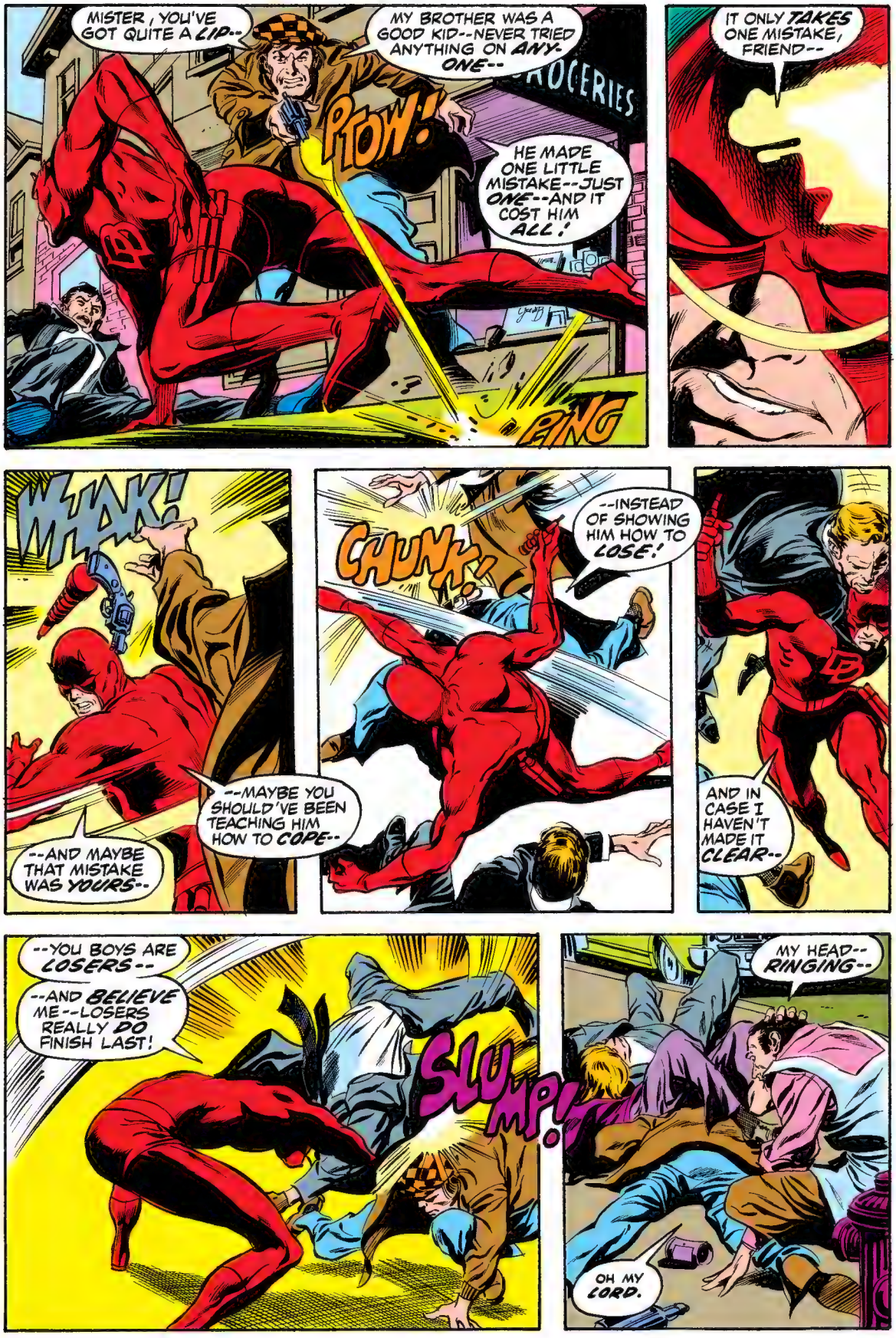

IVAN, HOWCUM YOU BECAME A CHAUFFEUR--?
YOU'D'VE MADE ONE DANDY PSYCHIATRIST.
WHY'D YOU TAKE UP THE SUPER-HERO BIZ, MURDOCK? 'CAUSE YOU LIKED IT?
NAH. YOU DO IT BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO.
LIKE ME--DRIVING'S IN MY BLOOD--


--AND I'M GETTIN' A BIT OLD FOR BURNING RUBBER IN THE UTAH SALT FLATS.
NOW C'MERE--AND LET'S LOOKIT THIS MAP!

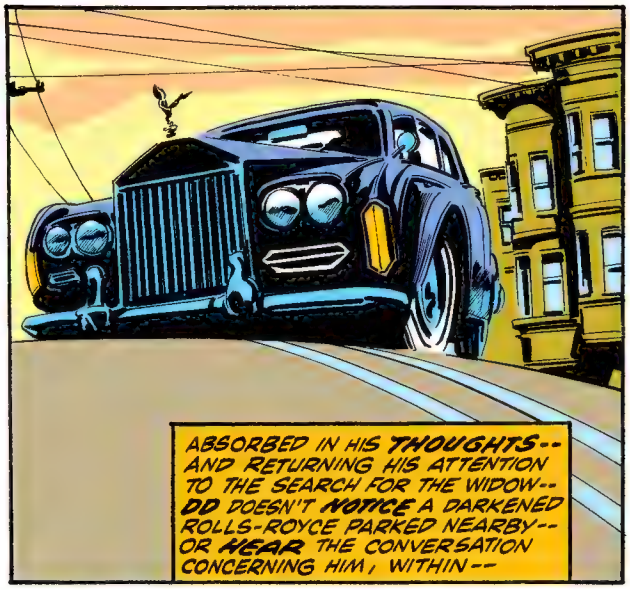
RUN YOUR FINGERS OVER IT, MATT-- THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL SAN FRANCISCO.
SHE'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERE, WITH THAT CREEP CALLED DANNY FRENCH--
DANNY? ARE YOU SURE?
POSITIVE, MATT. SHE TOLD ME HERSELF--
--SOMETHING ABOUT LOOKING FOR SOME KINDA GLOBE.
YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT, MATT?
EH-- NO, IVAN.
YEAH-- SAME HERE.
SUPPOSE YOU HEAD TOWARD THE CHINATOWN AREA, MATT--
I'LL CHECK THINGS OUT DOWNTOWN.
AND IF SHE'S LEFT THE CITY ENTIRELY, IVAN?
LET'S WORK ON THAT LATER, OKAY?
THE TWO MEN PART AT THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE NORTH SHORE MANSION-- ONE DUCKS OUTSIDE, WHILE THE OTHER STRIDES TO THE DARKENED GARAGE--
A GLOVED HAND FLICKS A NEARBY LIGHT SWITCH--
KLIK!
--AND AN ICY BLUE GLOW FILLS THE DAMP CEMENT TOMB--
MAYBE I DON'T HAVE RADAR-SENSES LIKE MATT-- BUT I DON'T NEED 'EM TO TELL HE WAS LYING TO ME BACK THERE--
HE DOES KNOW SOMETHIN' ABOUT THIS GLOBE--
--MAYBE SOMETHING IMPORTANT--
--AND YET-- HE DOESN'T TRUST ME. OR MAYBE THAT ISN'T IT--MAYBE NATASHA WANTS TO KEEP IT A SECRET, STILL--


--SO IT'S PROBABLY GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE MYSTERIOUS PROJECT FOUR SHE KEEPS HINTING ABOUT.
WELL, MATT-- LIKE IT OR NOT, THAT'S HER CHOICE--
--AND FRANKLY, I DON'T ENVY HER--
--OR YOU!
BUT THOUGHTS ARE NOT WORDS--AND SO, THE CAUSTIC RUSSIAN'S OBSERVATIONS GO UNHEARD BY THEIR SUBJECT--
--THE HIGH-FLYING HERO CALLED DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
MUSCLES STRAINING AND RELAXING, GUIDING THE PATH AND ANGLE OF HIS SWING, THE SCARLET-SUITED SWASHBUCKLER HEADS EAST ACROSS THE GABLED ROOFS AND TWISTING, DIVING SIDE STREETS--
HIS SIGHTLESS EYES CATCH NOTHING-- AND SO, HE DOES NOT SEE THE MUGGING IN PROGRESS SHORT YARDS BELOW--
--RATHER, HE HEARS IT!
VOICES-- SOMETHING HARD STRIKING SOMETHING SOFT--
SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE'S IN TROUBLE DOWN THERE--AND LIKE IT OR NOT--
--TROUBLE IS DD'S BUSINESS!

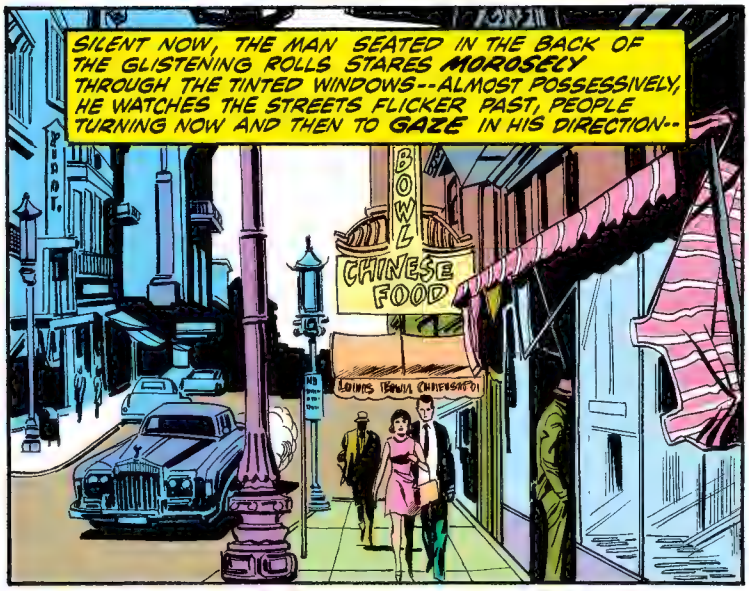
LOOK, I DON'T GOT NO CASH IN THE STORE--
I'M CLOSING UP--SENT A BOY DOWN TO THE BANK--
POPS, YOU'RE NOT PLAYING NICE WITH WILLIE BOY...
...AND WILLIE BOY IS NO MAN'S FOOL!
THE BANK CLOSES EARLY ON TUESDAYS, BUSTER--AND BESIDES--YOU DON'T HAVE A BOY WORKING HERE!
WE KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU, POPS--HOW YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A GUN BEHIND THAT CASH REGISTER OF YOURS--AND HOW YOU SHOT YOURSELF A THIEF WITH YOUR FANCY LITTLE COLT--
--AND HOW THE PUNK DIED--SPITTING UP HIS GUTS IN A COP AMBULANCE.
GROCERIES
KNOW SOMETHING ELSE, POPS--?
THE PUNK WAS MY BROTHER!
AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO AVENGE HIM, WILLIE BOY?
FUNNY--I'D'VE THOUGHT YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH FOR THE POOR KID BY SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE!
:YEEEOW!:
DAREDEVIL!

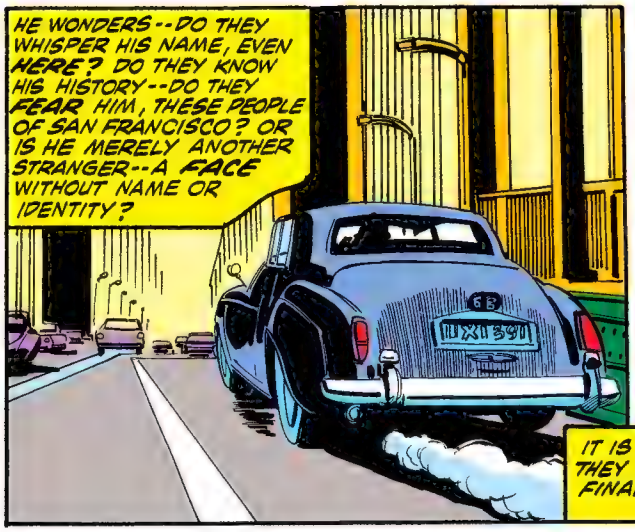

MISTER, YOU'VE GOT QUITE A LID--
MY BROTHER WAS A GOOD KID--NEVER TRIED ANYTHING ON ANY-ONE--
PTOW!
HE MADE ONE LITTLE MISTAKE--JUST ONE--AND IT COST HIM ALL!
PING
IT ONLY TAKES ONE MISTAKE, FRIEND--
WHAK!
--AND MAYBE THAT MISTAKE WAS YOURS--
--MAYBE YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN TEACHING HIM HOW TO COPE--
CHUNK!
--INSTEAD OF SHOWING HIM HOW TO LOSE!
AND IN CASE I HAVEN'T MADE IT CLEAR--
--YOU BOYS ARE LOSERS--
--AND BELIEVE ME--LOSERS REALLY DO FINISH LAST!
SLUMP!
MY HEAD--RINGING--
OH MY LORD.

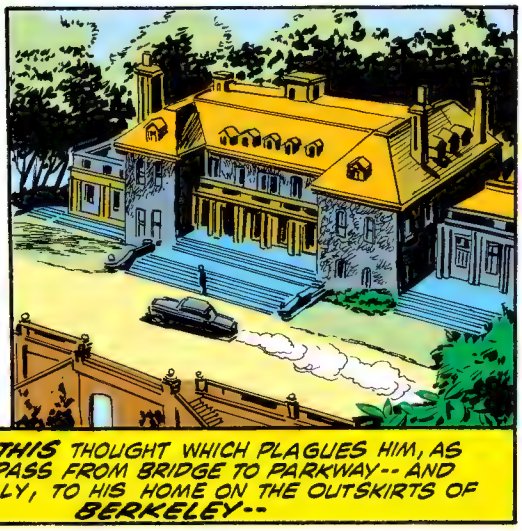
GUESS THERE'S NO NEED TO CALL THE POLICE--
THE SHOP-KEEPER'S SURE TO DO IT-- AND TAKE CREDIT FOR THE HAUL.
IN A WAY-- HE'S AS BAD AS WILLIE--
--AND NEXT TIME, HE MIGHT NOT BE SO LUCKY.

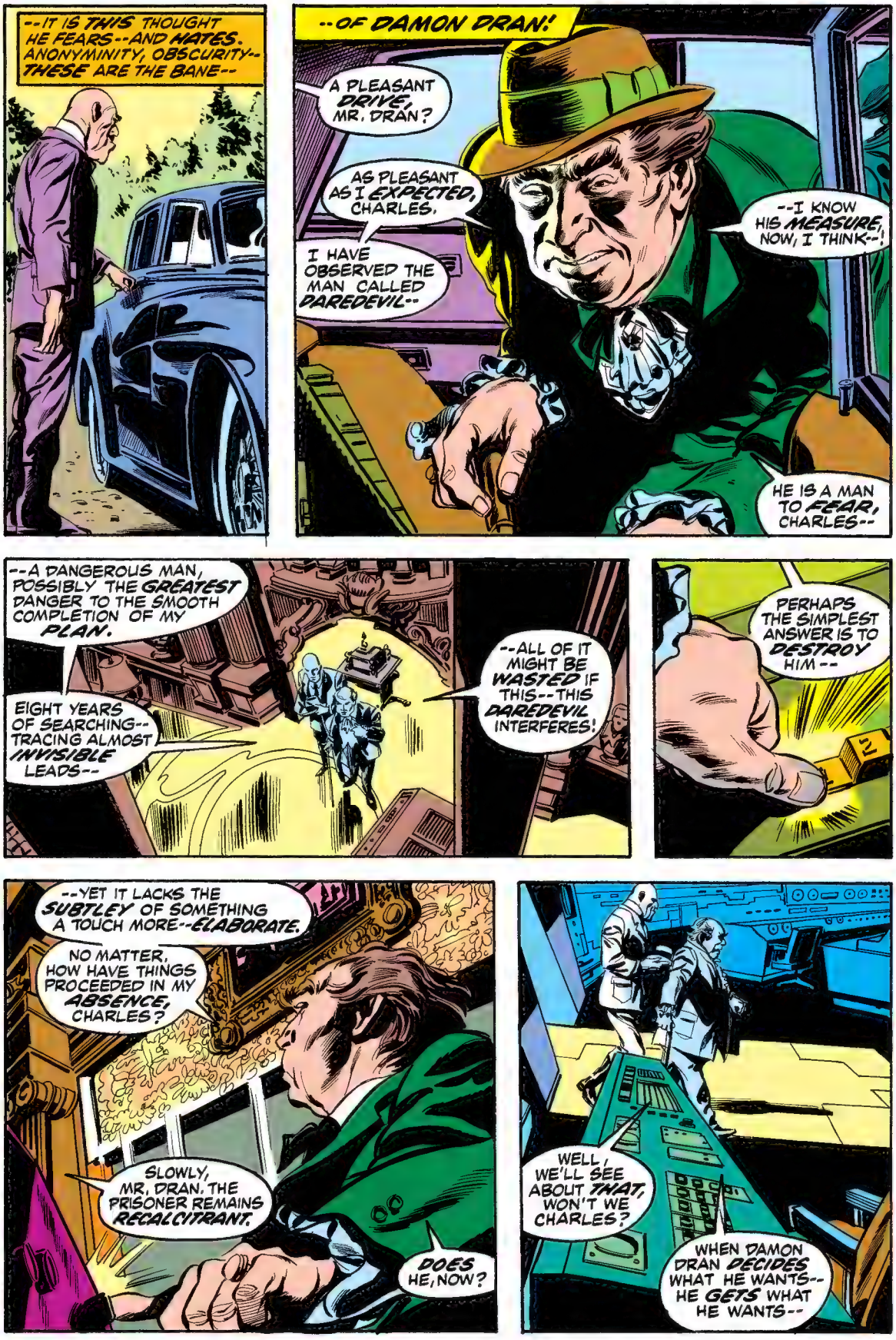

ABSORBED IN HIS THOUGHTS-- AND RETURNING HIS ATTENTION TO THE SEARCH FOR THE WIDOW-- DD DOESN'T NOTICE A DARKENED ROLLS-ROYCE PARKED NEARBY-- OR HEAR THE CONVERSATION CONCERNING HIM, WITHIN--

I'VE SEEN ALL I NEED TO SEE, WILLIAM.
RETURN HOME--AT ONCE.
YESSIR, MR. DRAN.


SILENT NOW, THE MAN SEATED IN THE BACK OF THE GLISTENING ROLLS STARES MOROSELY THROUGH THE TINTED WINDOWS--ALMOST POSSESSIVELY, HE WATCHES THE STREETS FLICKER PAST, PEOPLE TURNING NOW AND THEN TO GAZE IN HIS DIRECTION--
BOWL
CHINESE FOOD


HE WONDERS--DO THEY WHISPER HIS NAME, EVEN HERE? DO THEY KNOW HIS HISTORY--DO THEY FEAR HIM, THESE PEOPLE OF SAN FRANCISCO? OR IS HE MERELY ANOTHER STRANGER--A FACE WITHOUT NAME OR IDENTITY?


IT IS THIS THOUGHT WHICH PLAGUES HIM, AS THEY PASS FROM BRIDGE TO PARKWAY-- AND FINALLY, TO HIS HOME ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF BERKELEY--

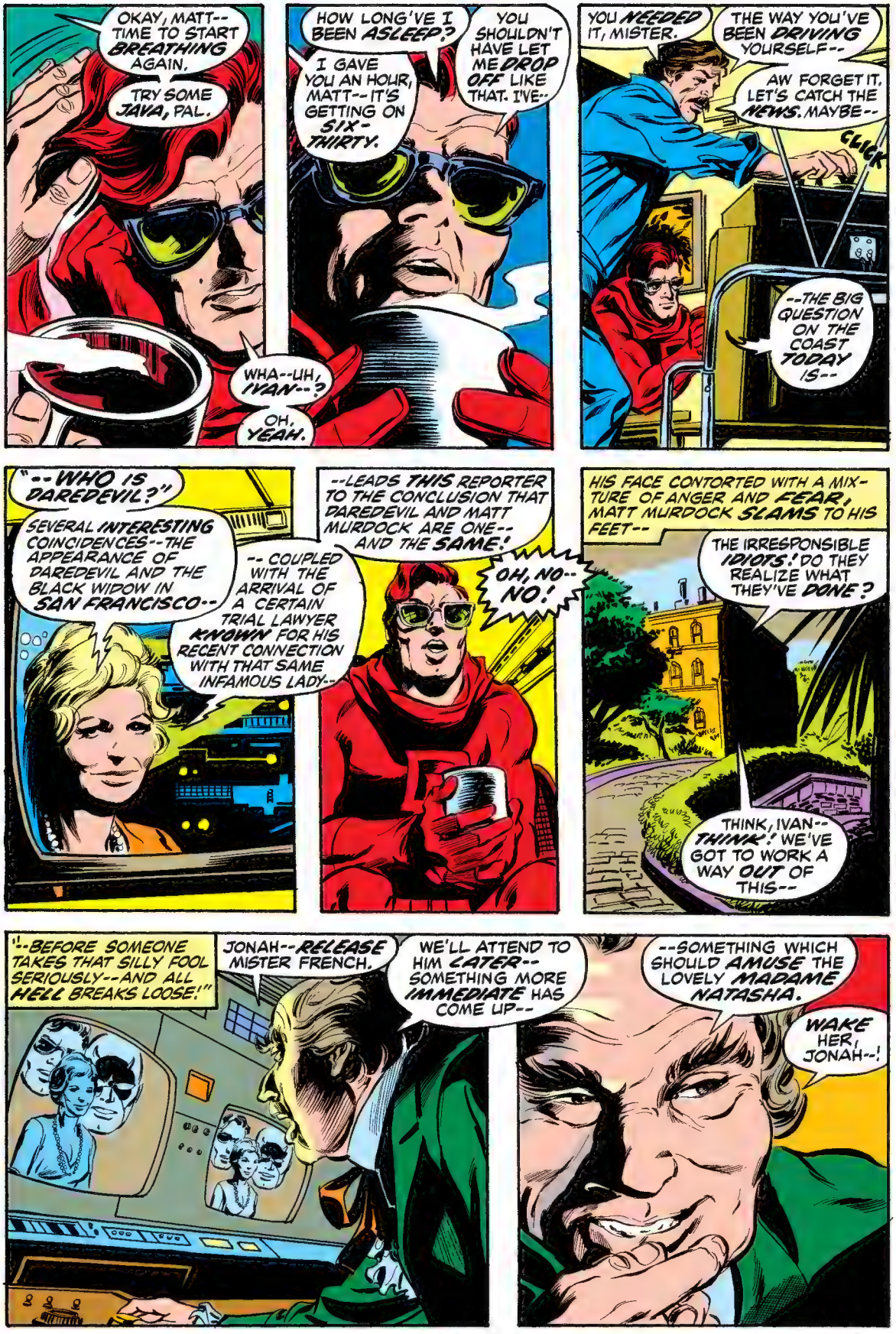

--IT IS THIS THOUGHT HE FEARS--AND HATES. ANONYMINITY, OBSCURITY-- THESE ARE THE BANE--
--OF DAMON DRAN!
A PLEASANT DRIVE, MR. DRAN?
AS PLEASANT AS I EXPECTED, CHARLES.
I HAVE OBSERVED THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL--
--I KNOW HIS MEASURE, NOW, I THINK--!
HE IS A MAN TO FEAR, CHARLES--
--A DANGEROUS MAN, POSSIBLY THE GREATEST DANGER TO THE SMOOTH COMPLETION OF MY PLAN.
EIGHT YEARS OF SEARCHING-- TRACING ALMOST INVISIBLE LEADS--
--ALL OF IT MIGHT BE WASTED IF THIS--THIS DAREDEVIL INTERFERES!
PERHAPS THE SIMPLEST ANSWER IS TO DESTROY HIM--
--YET IT LACKS THE SUBTLEY OF SOMETHING A TOUCH MORE--ELABORATE.
NO MATTER, HOW HAVE THINGS PROCEEDED IN MY ABSENCE, CHARLES?
SLOWLY, MR. DRAN. THE PRISONER REMAINS RECALCITRANT.
DOES HE, NOW?
WELL, WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT, WON'T WE CHARLES?
WHEN DAMON DRAN DECIDES WHAT HE WANTS-- HE GETS WHAT HE WANTS--

--AND I WANT-- PROJECT FOUR!
HIS SMILES, HIS FACE CRINKLING LIKE SOME DEPRAVED SANTA CLAUS-- FOR DAMON DRAN, A QUEST IS ENDING--
--A QUEST WHICH BEGAN SOME TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS BEFORE, WITH THE DISCOVERY THAT THE WORLD WAS NOT INDESTRUCTIBLE --THAT MAN COULD DESTROY HIS PLANET WITH A SINGLE ATOMIC WAR--
--AND THAT, IF THE WORLD WAS DESTROYED-- SO WAS DRAN--
--IN SPITE OF THE MUNITIONS EMPIRE HE'D CREATED--IN SPITE OF HIS INFLUENCE, HIS ALL-TOO-HUMAN POWER...
DAMON DRAN DISCOVERED HE COULD DIE-- AND NOT ALL HIS WILL COULD SAVE HIM!
AHHH. MY DEAR MISTER FRENCH...
CHARLES TELLS ME YOU'VE BEEN SLIGHTLY LESS THAN COOPERATIVE--
--AND I FIND THAT QUITE DISPLEASING.
YOU WILL TELL ME, YOU KNOW--
--AGAINST YOUR WILL, IF NECESSARY-- AND THAT CAN BE MOST-- UNPLEASANT.
FORGET IT, MISTER. DANNY'S LIPS ARE SEALED--
I'M NOT TELLING YOU WHERE THE GLOBE IS--
--SO MAYBE YOU'D BETTER DRAG OUT THE RUBBER HOSES AND GET STARTED-- HUH?
SUCH TOOLS WILL NOT BE REQUIRED, MR. FRENCH--
--NOT WITH-- THE MIND PROBE!
SUDDENLY-- SOMETHING HAPPENS IN THE MIND OF DANNY FRENCH--
AGAINST HIS WILL, HE FINDS HIMSELF REACHING BACK THROUGH LAYERS OF MEMORY TO THE PREVIOUS EVENING--

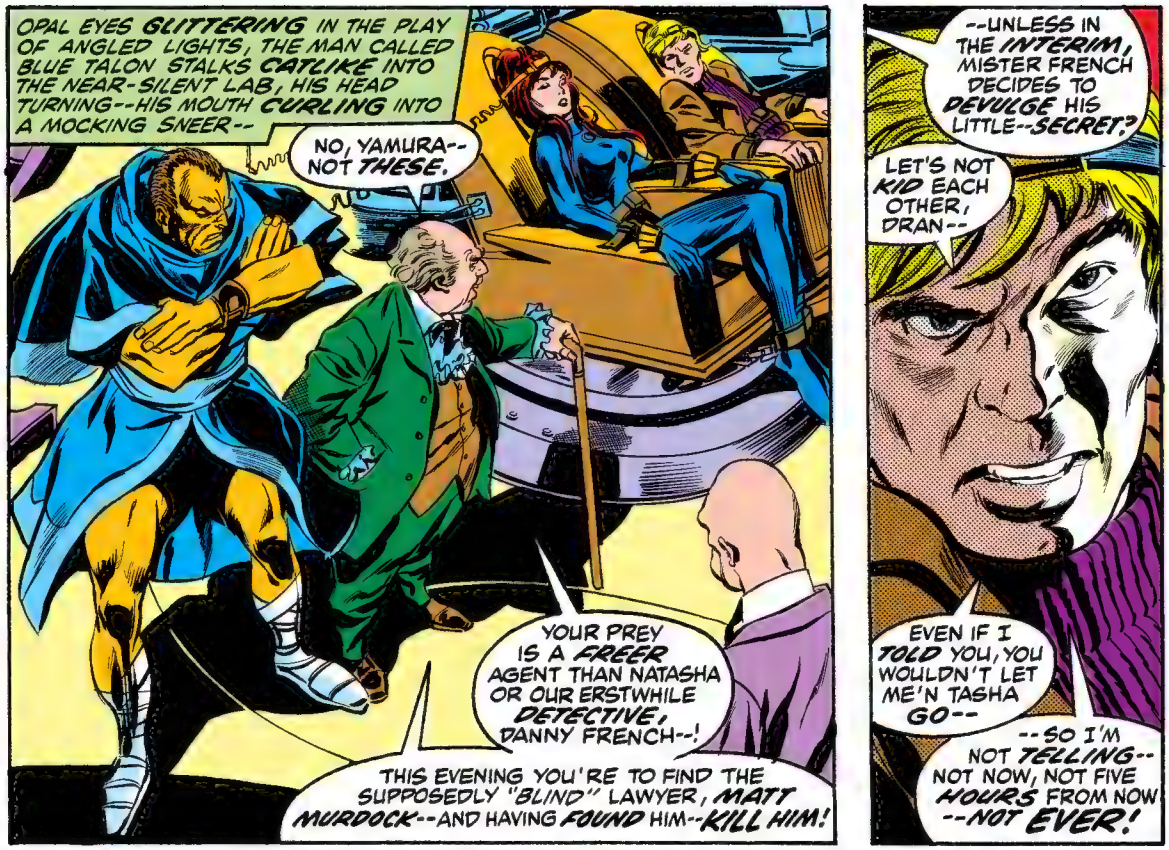
--BACK, TO THE SCENE IN DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO, AS HE AND THE EX-RUSSIAN SPY KNOWN AS THE BLACK WIDOW RACED THROUGH GROWING TWILIGHT SHADOWS, ARGUING OVER THE EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS--
--THEN IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN HUNTING DAREDEVIL AND I-- THEN WHO--?*
Y'GOT ME, LITTLE LADY.
LIKE I SAID-- I NEVER DID FIGURE OUT HOW TO WORK THAT ENERGY GLOBE WE STOLE--
*MISTER FEAR, THAT'S WHO-- AND IT HAPPENED, NATCH, LAST ISSUE! -- ROY.
--AND EVEN IF I HAD, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'D --
HOLY COW--
BLAM
--IT'S A BLOWOUT!
SCREEEE
KRAK!
KHHOOMP!
SPTOOM!
YET EVEN AS HE FELT THE CAR JERK WILDLY UNDER HIM, DANNY FRENCH REALIZED IT WASN'T A MERE FLAT-- SECONDS BEFORE THE BLOWOUT OCCURED, HE'D HEARD A SHARP CRACK--THE DISTANT UNFORGET-TABLE RETORT OF A HIGH-POWERED RIFLE--
--AND HE KNEW, THAT ONCE AGAIN--THE HUNTERS HAD BECOME THE HUNTED!

GET THEM, CHARLES-- THE GIRL, TOO.
AS YOU WISH, MR. DRAN.
NEITHER MUST ESCAPE!
DANNY FRENCH REMEMBERS-- HE RECALLS HOW HE LAY STUNNED, HIS MIND AWHIRL WITH LIGHT AND SOUND--
--WHILE MADAME NATASHA SHRUGGED OFF HER COAT, AND MOVED FORWARD TO BATTLE--
--A BATTLE SHE SHOULD HAVE BEEN TOO WEAK TO FIGHT WELL--
--BUT WHICH SHE DID FIGHT WELL--
--WITH SKILL!
UMMPHF!
WHUMP!
YET FINALLY, IT WASN'T HER WANING STRENGTH WHICH BETRAYED THE BLACK WIDOW--
THWAK!
--BUT A CAPRICIOUS FATE IN THE FORM OF A MISUNDERSTANDING MERCENARY--
DANNY, NO-- YOU DON'T UNDERSTA-

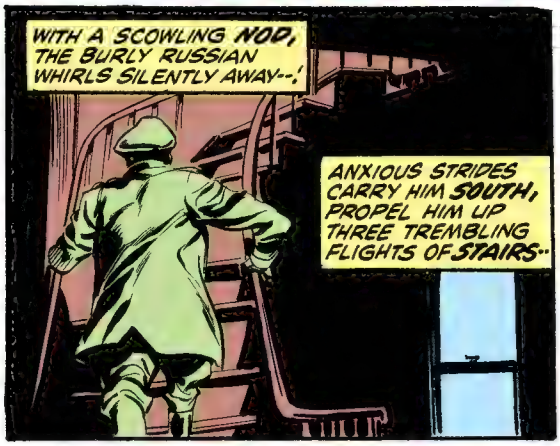
--UNDERSTAND? SURE I DO, SISTER--
YOU'VE BEEN BUGGING ME FOR TWO WEEKS--
--NOW IT'S DANNY'S TURN-- I CAN HANDLE HANDSOME--
-- NO SWEATTTTUNNNHH
CHUNK!
VERY AMUSING, MR. FRENCH--
--BUT NOT PRECISELY WHAT I WANT. YOUR FOOLISH ERRORS HARDLY CONCERN ME NOW,
WE MUST PROBE DEEPER--
Y'KNOW SOME-THING, DRAN? I FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT--
YOU'RE A NUTTY DENTIST.
JOKE ALL YOU WILL, MR. FRENCH.
JONAH-- INCREASE THE VOLTAGE--
OUR GUEST REQUIRES A-- SMALL LESSON!
--AND I THINK--I'M GONNA GET IT, TOO!
SIX HOURS, FROM MIDNIGHT TO DAWN: AND IN THOSE HOURS, THE HOURS OF EARLY MORNING, TWO MEN COVER MOST OF SAN FRANCISCO-- AND FIND--
--NOTHING!
FEEL AS THOUGH I'VE PUSHED MY FACE THROUGH A WRINGER--
--AND WHAT FOR? A FEW LOUSY LEADS--!
BUT-- WHAT AM I MOANING ABOUT? AT LEAST I GOT LEADS--
ALL MURDOCK GOT WAS A NIGHT WITHOUT SLEEP!


OKAY, MATT-- TIME TO START BREATHING AGAIN.
TRY SOME JAVA, PAL.
WHA--UH, IVAN--?
OH, YEAH.
HOW LONG'VE I BEEN ASLEEP?
I GAVE YOU AN HOUR, MATT-- IT'S GETTING ON SIX-THIRTY.
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE LET ME DROP OFF LIKE THAT. I'VE--
YOU NEEDED IT, MISTER.
THE WAY YOU'VE BEEN DRIVING YOURSELF--
AW FORGET IT. LET'S CATCH THE NEWS. MAYBE--
CLICK
--THE BIG QUESTION ON THE COAST TODAY IS--
"--WHO IS DAREDEVIL?"
SEVERAL INTERESTING COINCIDENCES--THE APPEARANCE OF DAREDEVIL AND THE BLACK WIDOW IN SAN FRANCISCO--
-- COUPLED WITH THE ARRIVAL OF A CERTAIN TRIAL LAWYER KNOWN FOR HIS RECENT CONNECTION WITH THAT SAME INFAMOUS LADY--
--LEADS THIS REPORTER TO THE CONCLUSION THAT DAREDEVIL AND MATT MURDOCK ARE ONE-- AND THE SAME!
OH, NO-- NO!
HIS FACE CONTORTED WITH A MIXTURE OF ANGER AND FEAR, MATT MURDOCK SLAMS TO HIS FEET--
THE IRRESPONSIBLE IDIOTS! DO THEY REALIZE WHAT THEY'VE DONE?
THINK, IVAN-- THINK! WE'VE GOT TO WORK A WAY OUT OF THIS--
"--BEFORE SOMEONE TAKES THAT SILLY FOOL SERIOUSLY--AND ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE!"
JONAH--RELEASE MISTER FRENCH.
WE'LL ATTEND TO HIM LATER-- SOMETHING MORE IMMEDIATE HAS COME UP--
--SOMETHING WHICH SHOULD AMUSE THE LOVELY MADAME NATASHA.
WAKE HER, JONAH--!

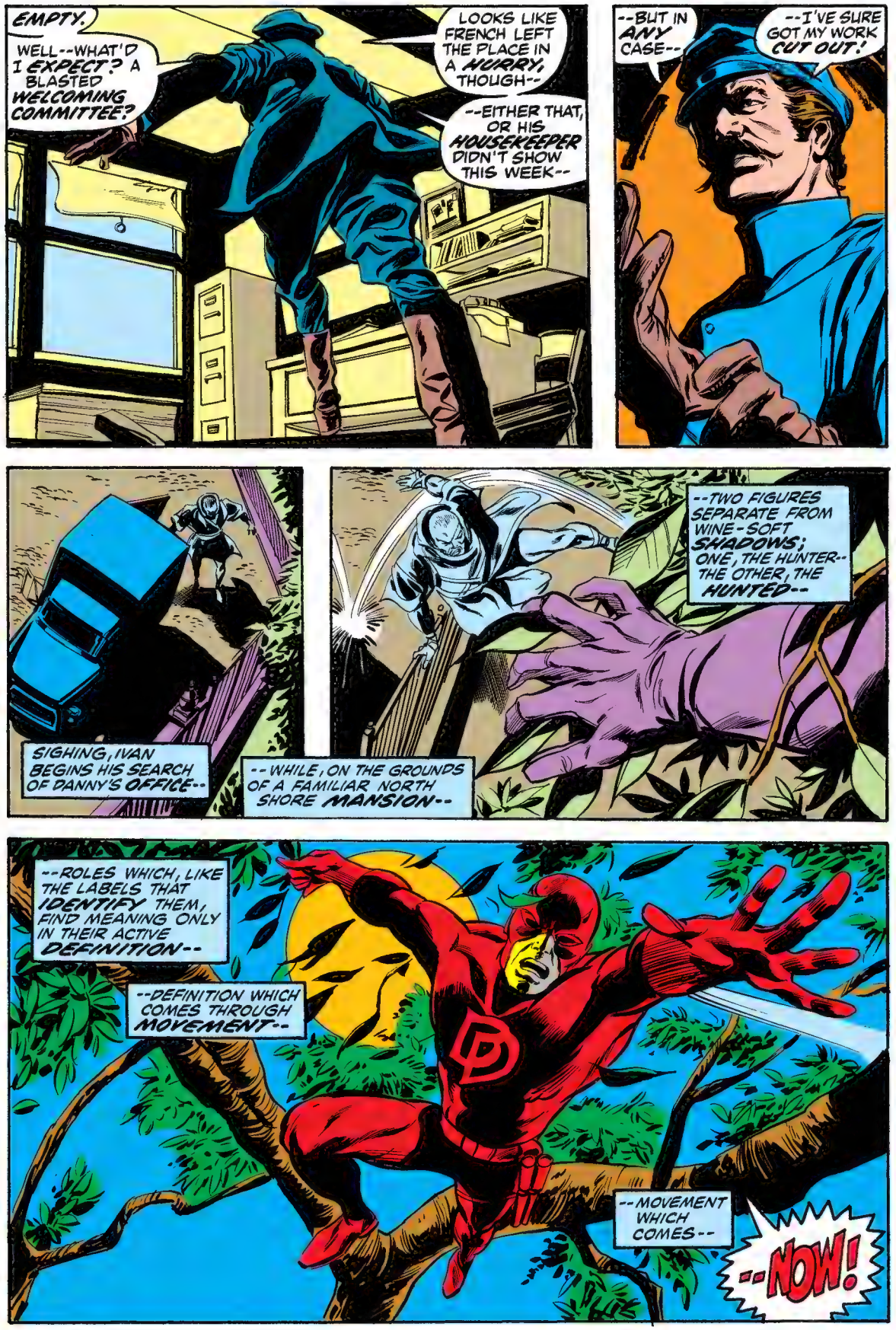
I THINK YAMURA WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE YOUNG LADY'S ACQUAINTANCE.
YES--I THINK HE'D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH.
I'M SORRY, MISTER DRAN--BUT THAT'S JUST NOT POSSIBLE.
SHE'S SUFFERED A SEVERE SHOCK TO HER NERVOUS SYSTEM--
--SHE'S SLIPPING--EASING INTO A COMA, I'M AFRAID.
SMALL MATTER, MY FRIEND...
ON RECONSIDERATION, YAMURA IS NOT HER TYPE...
...HE HAS AFFECTION ONLY FOR HIS VICTIMS.
IT'S WHAT MAKES HIM SUCH A FINE ASSASSIN!
BLAST! USELESS TOYS--THE OUTSIDE DOORS WON'T OPEN!
YAMURA: COME IN HERE!
--I NEED YOU!
AS YOU COMMAND, MISTER DRAN--
--THE BLUE TALON COMES!!
KKKRASH! BANG!


OPAL EYES GLITTERING IN THE PLAY OF ANGLED LIGHTS, THE MAN CALLED BLUE TALON STALKS CATLIKE INTO THE NEAR-SILENT LAB, HIS HEAD TURNING--HIS MOUTH CURLING INTO A MOCKING SNEER--
NO, YAMURA--NOT THESE.
YOUR PREY IS A FREER AGENT THAN NATASHA OR OUR ERSTWHILE DETECTIVE, DANNY FRENCH--!
THIS EVENING YOU'RE TO FIND THE SUPPOSEDLY "BLIND" LAWYER, MATT MURDOCK--AND HAVING FOUND HIM--KILL HIM!
--UNLESS IN THE INTERIM, MISTER FRENCH DECIDES TO DEVULGE HIS LITTLE--SECRET?
LET'S NOT KID EACH OTHER, DRAN--
EVEN IF I TOLD YOU, YOU WOULDN'T LET ME'N TASHA GO--
--SO I'M NOT TELLING--NOT NOW, NOT FIVE HOURS FROM NOW --NOT EVER!

BRAVE SENTIMENTS--AND YET, SUCH DETERMINATION MAY WEAKEN UNDER THE INEXORABLE MIND-PROBE--FOR THE DAY IS LONG, AND WHEN EVENING FINALLY ARRIVES--
--HELP IS STILL MILES DISTANT--!
L-LOOK, MISTER--I TOLDYA EVERYTHING I KNOW!
FRENCH IS SOME SORTA PRIVATE EYE--HE RENTS A STUDIO UP ON CLAYMORE STREET!
CHECK IT FOR YOURSELF!

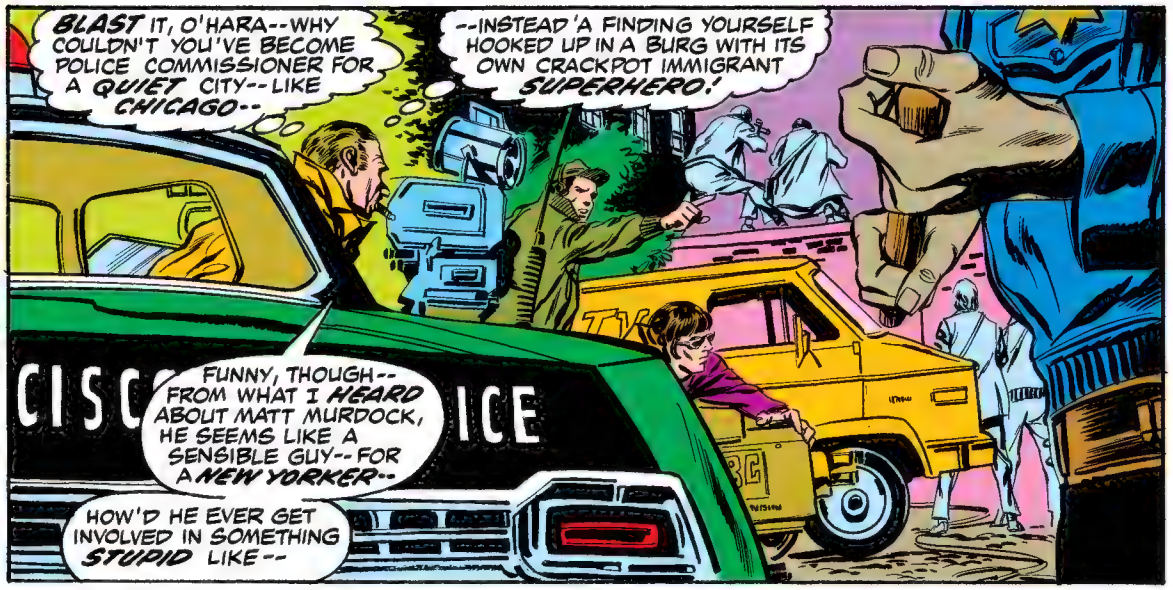

WITH A SCOWLING NOD, THE BURLY RUSSIAN WHIRLS SILENTLY AWAY--!
ANXIOUS STRIDES CARRY HIM SOUTH, PROPEL HIM UP THREE TREMBLING FLIGHTS OF STAIRS--

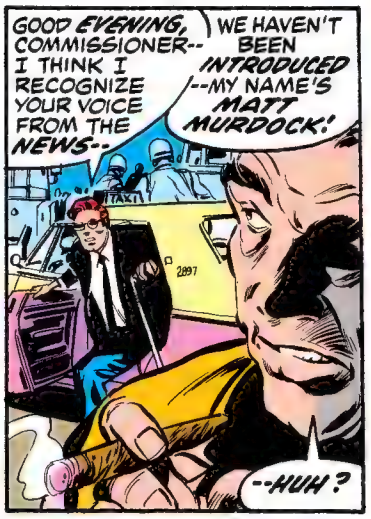
--AND WORDLESS, THROUGH A TIGHTLY-BOLTED DOOR!
SCRASH!

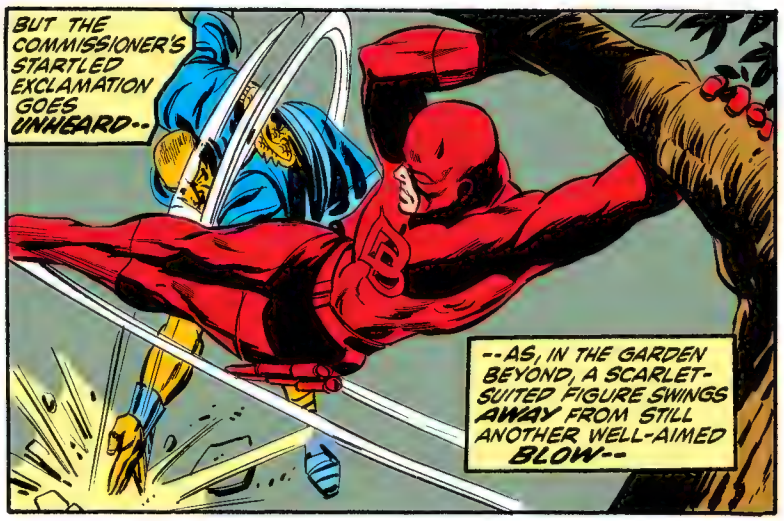

EMPTY.
WELL--WHAT'D I EXPECT? A BLASTED WELCOMING COMMITTEE?
LOOKS LIKE FRENCH LEFT THE PLACE IN A HURRY, THOUGH--
--EITHER THAT, OR HIS HOUSEKEEPER DIDN'T SHOW THIS WEEK--
--BUT IN ANY CASE--
--I'VE SURE GOT MY WORK CUT OUT!
SIGHING, IVAN BEGINS HIS SEARCH OF DANNY'S OFFICE--
--WHILE, ON THE GROUNDS OF A FAMILIAR NORTH SHORE MANSION--
--TWO FIGURES SEPARATE FROM WINE-SOFT SHADOWS; ONE, THE HUNTER-- THE OTHER, THE HUNTED--
--ROLES WHICH, LIKE THE LABELS THAT IDENTIFY THEM, FIND MEANING ONLY IN THEIR ACTIVE DEFINITION--
--DEFINITION WHICH COMES THROUGH MOVEMENT--
--MOVEMENT WHICH COMES--
--NOW!

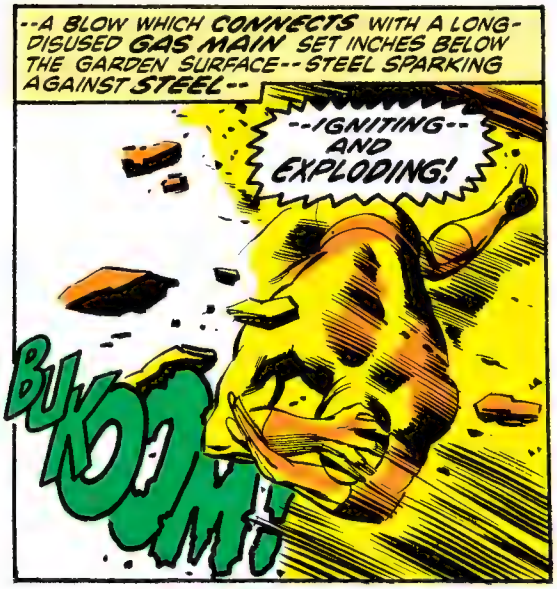
HAVEN'T I SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE, FRIEND?
YEAH--ON A DOCUMENTARY SEVERAL YEARS AGO, SOMETHING ABOUT THE MARTIAL ARTS--
WHAT WAS THE NAME AGAIN--CLAW? BROWN CLAW?
BLUE TALON, DOLT--
--A NAME WHICH SHALL CUT YOUR EPITATH!
SWO
OOD
AH--YOU ARE FAST, AMERICAN--THIS IS GOOD--
--THIS IS VERY GOOD--!
MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE LAST I FOUND AN OPPONENT WORTHY OF BATTLE--
NOT SINCE I LEFT JAPAN--AND LOST THE DELICATE USE OF MY HANDS--HAVE I TRULY RELISHED CONFLICT--
--AND SO I YEARN FOR A MAN OF SKILL--OF AGILITY--
--SOMEONE WITH WHOM I MAY TEST MY POWERS--
--BEFORE I AM FORCED TO KILL HIM!
SOUNDS LIKE A WHOLE PASSLE OF FUN, HAWK-NOSE--
--AND NOW THAT THE PRELIMINARIES ARE OVER--MAYBE IT'S ABOUT TIME WE GOT STARTED!

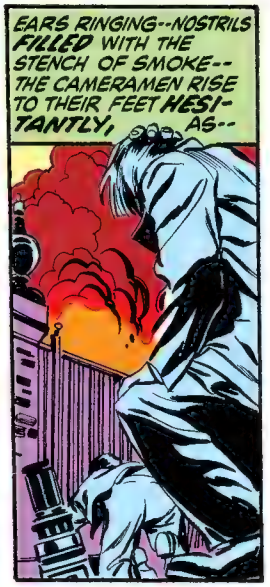
EYES ABLAZE, A SNARL RUMBLING DEEP IN HIS CHEST, BLUE TALON LUNGES FORWARD, HIS HAND CUTTING IN A SPARKLING ARC ALMOST INVISIBLE IN THE LIGHT OF THE RISING MOON--
SKKRAK!
BY THE THINNEST OF HAIRS--HE MISSES--
--AND WITHOUT A BREAK IN HIS STRIDE, HE PARRIES AND SWINGS AGAIN!
THOOSS
--AND AGAIN--MISSES!
THRAK!
WARILY, THEY CIRCLE--EYES FLICKERING FROM HANDS TO FEET, TO ALMOST UNNOTICEABLE MOVEMENTS OF SHOULDERS--THEIR BREATH COMES IN SHORT, WHISPERING GASPS--
--YAMURA'S FOREHEAD SHINES WITH SWEAT FROM CONCENTRATION--
--AND THEN--
--THE BLUE TALON STRIKES!
BUNK
NEWS TRAVELS QUICKLY IN SAN FRANCISCO--ESPECIALLY WHEN REPORTED BY CURIOUS NEIGHBORS--AND THE FIRST MOMENTS OF DAREDEVIL'S BATTLE HAVE NOT EVEN PASSED BEFORE--
EE EE EE EE


BLAST IT, O'HARA--WHY COULDN'T YOU'VE BECOME POLICE COMMISSIONER FOR A QUIET CITY--LIKE CHICAGO--
--INSTEAD 'A FINDING YOURSELF HOOKED UP IN A BURG WITH ITS OWN CRACKPOT IMMIGRANT SUPERHERO!
FUNNY, THOUGH--FROM WHAT I HEARD ABOUT MATT MURDOCK, HE SEEMS LIKE A SENSIBLE GUY--FOR A NEW YORKER--
HOW'D HE EVER GET INVOLVED IN SOMETHING STUPID LIKE--

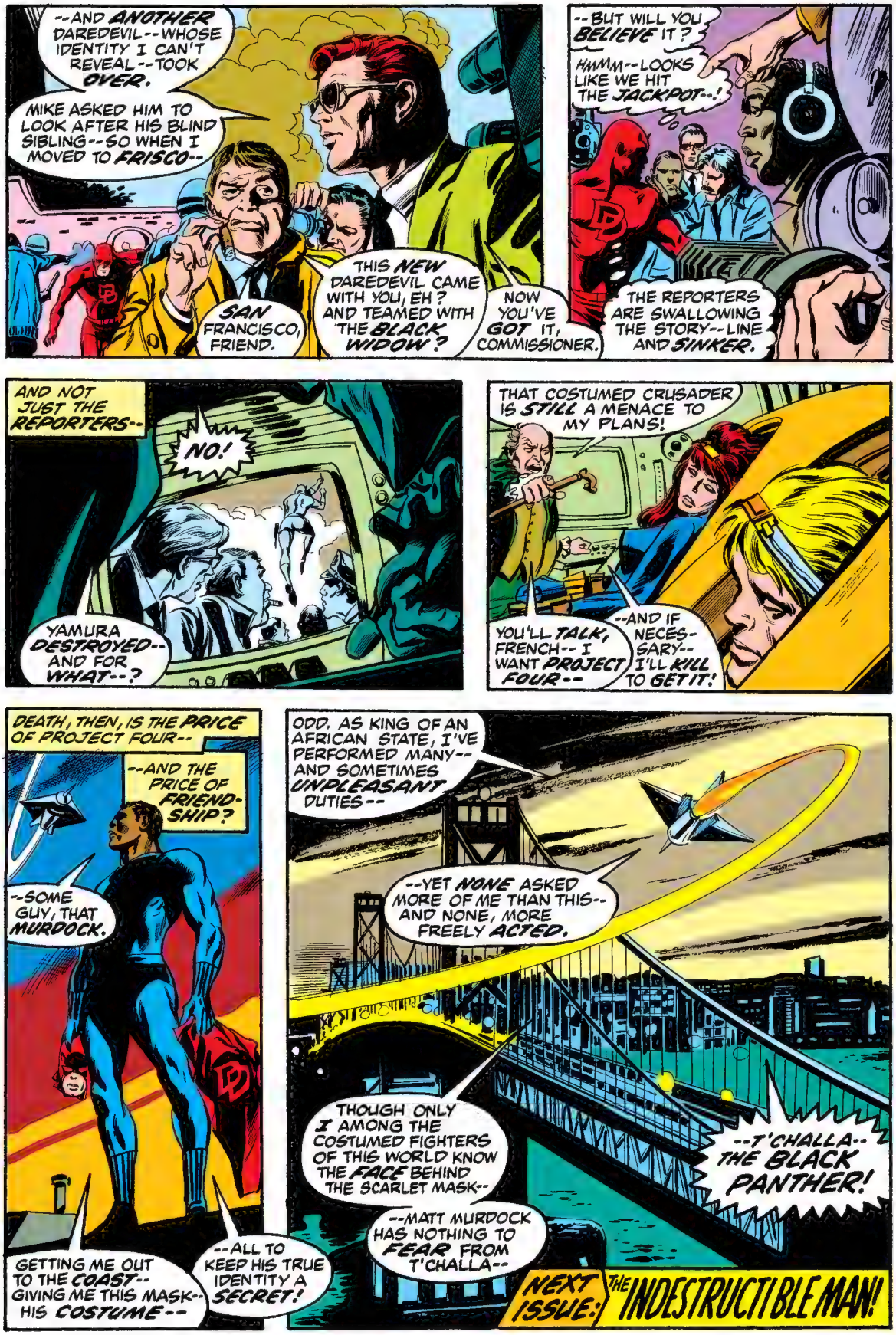

GOOD EVENING, COMMISSIONER--I THINK I RECOGNIZE YOUR VOICE FROM THE NEWS--
WE HAVEN'T BEEN INTRODUCED--MY NAME'S MATT MURDOCK!
--HUH?


BUT THE COMMISSIONER'S STARTLED EXCLAMATION GOES UNHEARD--
--AS, IN THE GARDEN BEYOND, A SCARLET-SUITED FIGURE SWINGS AWAY FROM STILL ANOTHER WELL-AIMED BLOW--


--A BLOW WHICH CONNECTS WITH A LONG-DISUSED GAS MAIN SET INCHES BELOW THE GARDEN SURFACE--STEEL SPARKING AGAINST STEEL--
--IGNITING--AND EXPLODING!
BUKOOM!


EARS RINGING--NOSTRILS FILLED WITH THE STENCH OF SMOKE--THE CAMERAMEN RISE TO THEIR FEET HESITANTLY, AS--

MAYBE YOU'D BETTER EXPLAIN, MURDOCK, I THOUGHT--
THAT I WAS DAREDEVIL? NO, COMMISSIONER--
THE ORIGINAL DAREDEVIL WAS MY BROTHER, MIKE MURDOCK--*
--HE DIED OVER A YEAR AGO--
*AND MIKE--WAS MATT!'--RASCALLY ROY.


--AND ANOTHER DAREDEVIL--WHOSE IDENTITY I CAN'T REVEAL--TOOK OVER.
MIKE ASKED HIM TO LOOK AFTER HIS BLIND SIBLING--SO WHEN I MOVED TO FRISCO--
SAN FRANCISCO, FRIEND.
THIS NEW DAREDEVIL CAME WITH YOU, EH? AND TEAMED WITH THE BLACK WIDOW?
NOW YOU'VE GOT IT, COMMISSIONER.
--BUT WILL YOU BELIEVE IT?
HMMM--LOOKS LIKE WE HIT THE JACKPOT--!
THE REPORTERS ARE SWALLOWING THE STORY--LINE AND SINKER.
AND NOT JUST THE REPORTERS--
NO!
YAMURA DESTROYED--AND FOR WHAT--?
THAT COSTUMED CRUSADER IS STILL A MENACE TO MY PLANS!
YOU'LL TALK, FRENCH--I WANT PROJECT FOUR--
--AND IF NECESSARY--I'LL KILL TO GET IT!
DEATH, THEN, IS THE PRICE OF PROJECT FOUR--
--AND THE PRICE OF FRIENDSHIP?
--SOME GUY, THAT MURDOCK.
GETTING ME OUT TO THE COAST--GIVING ME THIS MASK--HIS COSTUME--
--ALL TO KEEP HIS TRUE IDENTITY A SECRET!
ODD. AS KING OF AN AFRICAN STATE, I'VE PERFORMED MANY--AND SOMETIMES UNPLEASANT DUTIES--
--YET NONE ASKED MORE OF ME THAN THIS--AND NONE, MORE FREELY ACTED.
THOUGH ONLY I AMONG THE COSTUMED FIGHTERS OF THIS WORLD KNOW THE FACE BEHIND THE SCARLET MASK--
--MATT MURDOCK HAS NOTHING TO FEAR FROM T'CHALLA--
--T'CHALLA--THE BLACK PANTHER!
NEXT ISSUE: THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN!

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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20¢
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DAREDEVIL®
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW
THAT WOULD-BE KILLER IS DOWN--BENEATH TONS OF RUBBLE!
GUESS THAT'S THE LAST WE'LL SEE OF HIM!
DON'T LOOK NOW, DD--BUT THAT "WOULD-BE KILLER" IS ALSO KNOWN AS--
THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™

SOFT WINDS OFF THE SEA: A BREEZE JUST THE SLIGHTEST BIT COOL FOR THIS WARM AUGUST EVENING, CARRYING, PERHAPS, A HINT OF COMING RAIN--
--CARRYING OTHER THINGS AS WELL--SUCH AS TWO ARCING FIGURES, ONE STALKING--THE OTHER, STALKED--
--CARRYING THEM BOTH--UNTIL A WIRE IS RELEASED-- A BODY FALLS--
STARLITE ROOF
--AND A DEADLY BATTLE BEGINS!
A POWER CORRUPT!
STAN LEE PRESENTS:
GERRY CONWAY, SCRIPTER
GENE COLAN, ARTIST
TOM PALMER, INKER
JOHN COSTANZA, LETTERER
ROY THOMAS, EDITOR

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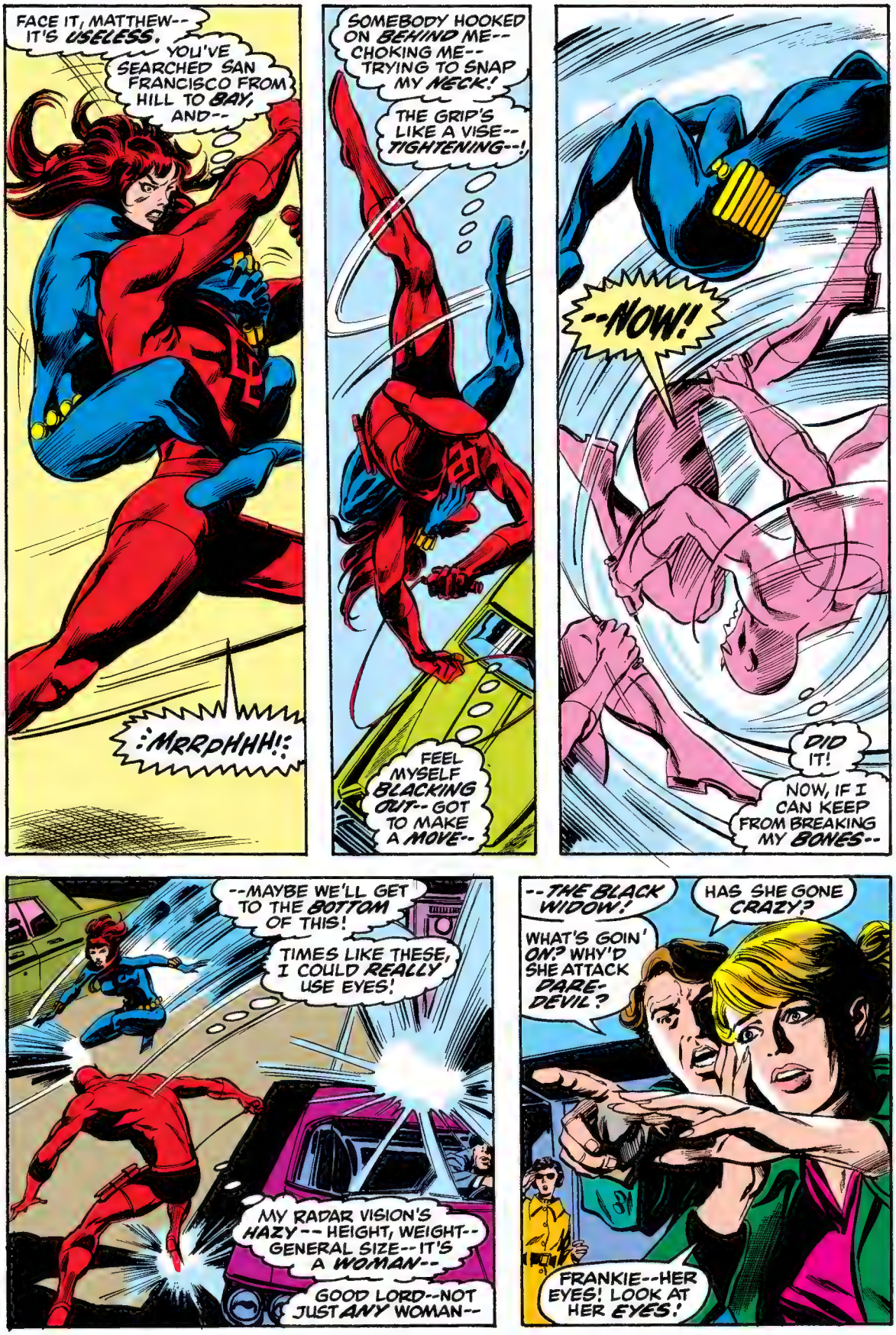
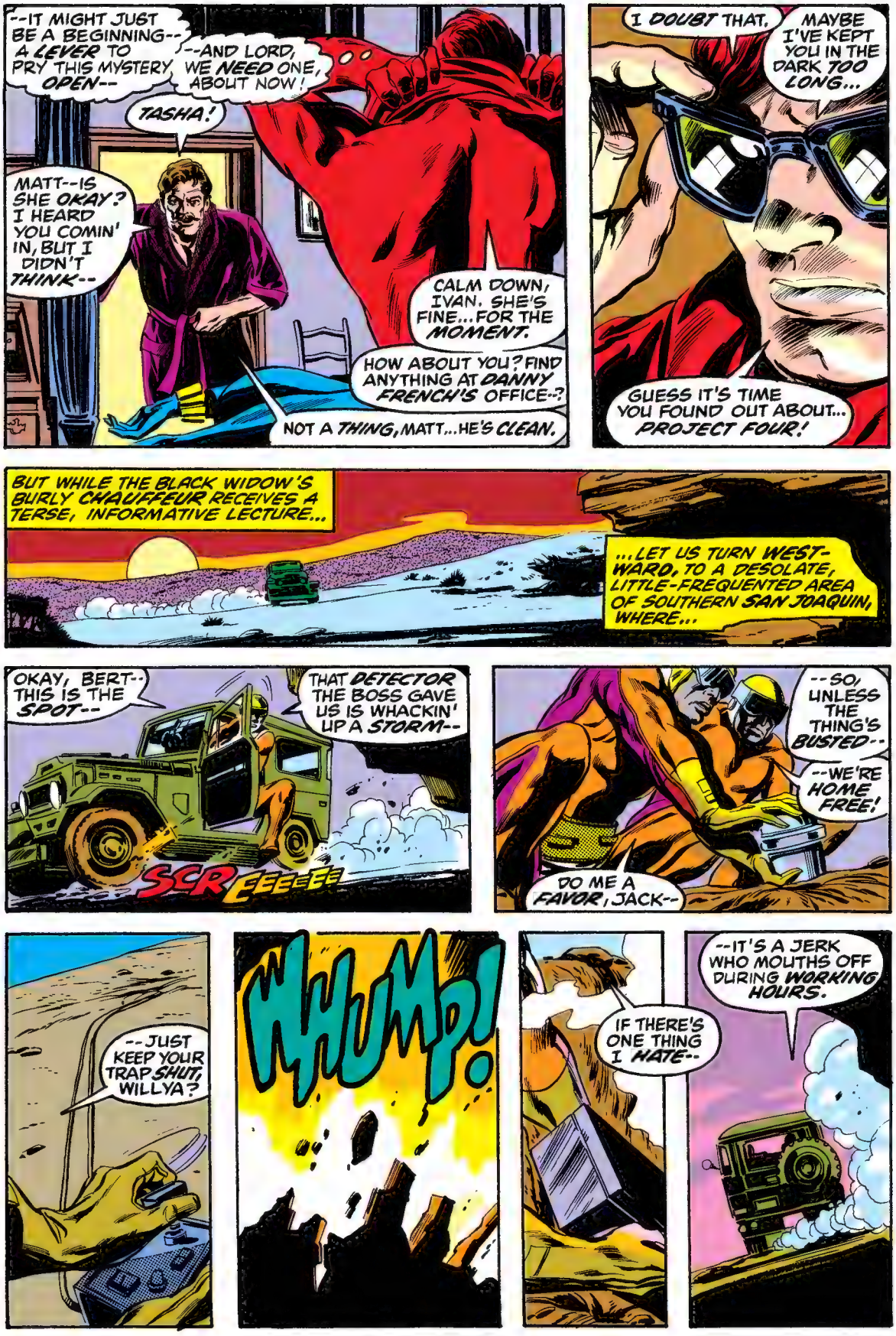
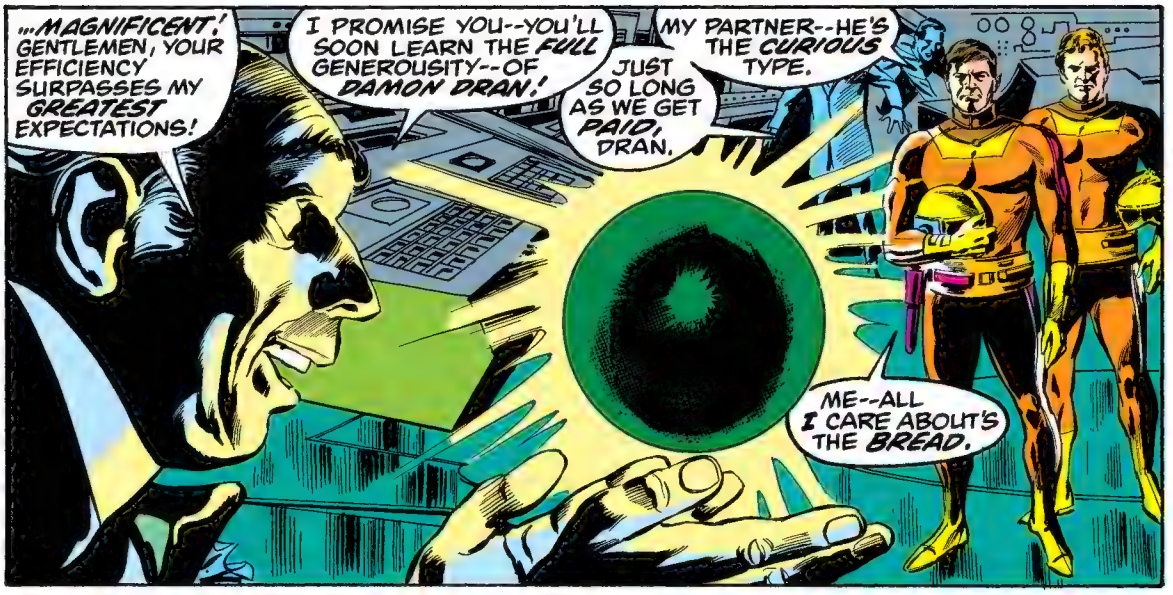
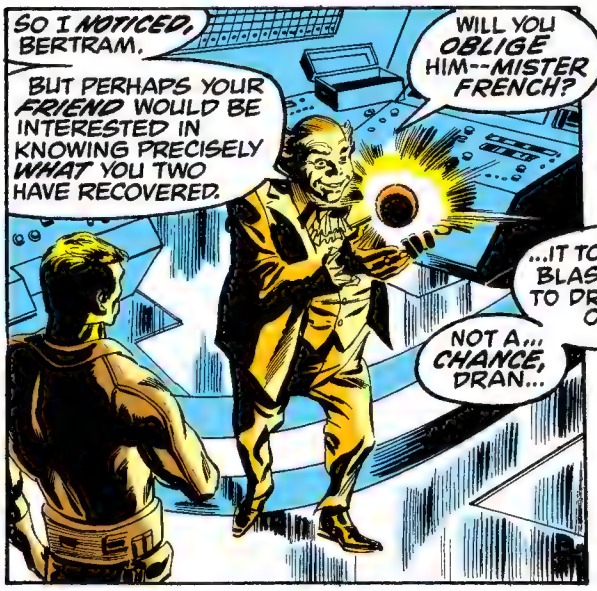

FACE IT, MATTHEW-- IT'S USELESS.
YOU'VE SEARCHED SAN FRANCISCO FROM HILL TO BAY, AND--
:MRRPHHH!:
SOMEBODY HOOKED ON BEHIND ME-- CHOKING ME-- TRYING TO SNAP MY NECK!
THE GRIP'S LIKE A VISE-- TIGHTENING--!
FEEL MYSELF BLACKING OUT-- GOT TO MAKE A MOVE--
--NOW!
DID IT!
NOW, IF I CAN KEEP FROM BREAKING MY BONES--
--MAYBE WE'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS!
TIMES LIKE THESE, I COULD REALLY USE EYES!
MY RADAR VISION'S HAZY-- HEIGHT, WEIGHT-- GENERAL SIZE-- IT'S A WOMAN--
GOOD LORD--NOT JUST ANY WOMAN--
--THE BLACK WIDOW!
HAS SHE GONE CRAZY?
WHAT'S GOIN' ON? WHY'D SHE ATTACK DARE-DEVIL?
FRANKIE--HER EYES! LOOK AT HER EYES!

AS ALWAYS, IT HAPPENS QUICKLY-- A MOMENT OF SHOCK, AN INSTANT OF REACTION--
--AND THEN-- ONLY THEN--A THOUGHTFUL PAUSE, AND DAWNING REALIZATION--!
TASHA...?
WHAT...?
THERE'S NO ANSWER. IN THE SILENCE THAT FOLLOWS, THE MAN KNOWN AS DAREDEVIL GROWS UNNATURALLY GRIM--
HIS JAW FIRMS-- AND IF HIS SIGHTLESS EYES COULD BE SEEN, AN OBSERVER WOULD FIND THEM COLD--AND HARD--!
SUDDENLY, THE TABLEAU IS BROKEN--
WITH A MADDENED CRY, THE WIDOW STRIKES--!
TWICE, HER SLASHING HAND CUTS THE AIR, NARROWLY MISSING THE MAN BEFORE HER--!
TWICE, HE TWISTS ASIDE--
--UNTIL FINALLY, MUSCLES RIPPLING LITHELY UNDER A SKINTIGHT COSTUME--
--HE MOVES--
--HESITATING ONCE TO CHECK FEMININE FEATURES, ASSURING HIMSELF COMPLETELY OF HIS ATTACKER'S IDENTITY--
--AND THEN HESITATING-- NO MORE!
SORRY, NATASHA... LATER, WE'LL HAVE A LONG TALK...
...BUT FOR NOW...

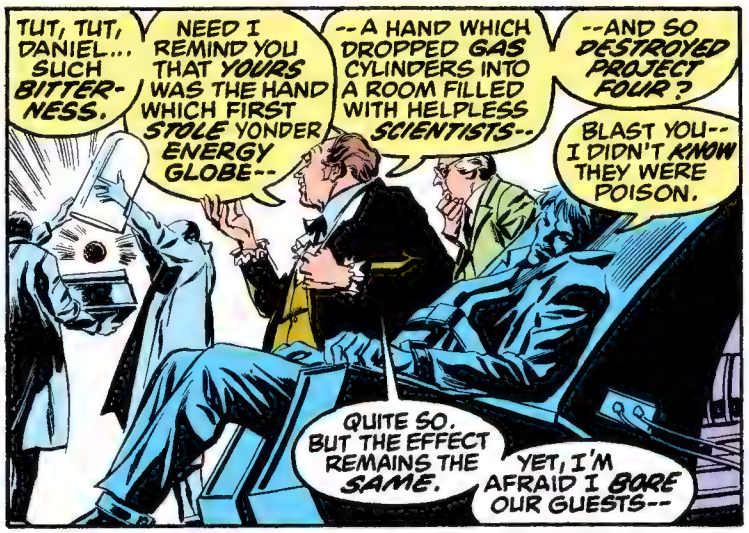
...OUT. I HATED TO DO THAT, BUT I COULDN'T LET HER--
WAIT! THAT TICKING SOUND--
MAN, YOU'RE REAL TOUGH, AREN'T YOU?
BEATIN' ON A HELPLESS FEMME--!
GET BACK-- ALL OF YOU!
TIC
SOBERED BY SOMETHING IN THE MASKED MAN'S VOICE, THE CROWD FALLS BACK--
--STARING IN CONFUSED WONDER AS GLOVED FINGERS UNSNAP A SEEMINGLY INNOCENT BELT ORNAMENT--.
--AND WITH ONE TREMENDOUS HEAVE--
--HURL THAT ORNAMENT HIGH INTO THE DUSK-DARKENED SKY!
BA-BOOM!
IN THE ENSUING CONFUSION, TWO SHADOWS VANISH--
--AND BECOME ONE WITH THE TWILIGHT DARKNESS.
SOON, ON THE NORTH SHORE...
I WONDER... COULD THERE BE A CONNECTION BETWEEN WHAT HAPPENED HERE YESTERDAY...
...AND TASHA'S ATTACKING ME TODAY?
AFTER ALL, I STILL DON'T KNOW WHERE THE GUY CALLED "BLUE TALON" CAME FROM--
--AND WHAT WITH LOOKING FOR NATASHA THESE PAST THIRTY-ODD HOURS, I HAVEN'T MANAGED TO GIVE IT MUCH THOUGHT.
BUT, IF THERE IS A TIE-IN BETWEEN THE TWO--


--IT MIGHT JUST BE A BEGINNING-- A LEVER TO PRY THIS MYSTERY OPEN--
--AND LORD, WE NEED ONE, ABOUT NOW!
TASHA!
MATT--IS SHE OKAY? I HEARD YOU COMIN' IN, BUT I DIDN'T THINK--
CALM DOWN, IVAN. SHE'S FINE...FOR THE MOMENT.
HOW ABOUT YOU? FIND ANYTHING AT DANNY FRENCH'S OFFICE--?
NOT A THING, MATT...HE'S CLEAN.
I DOUBT THAT.
MAYBE I'VE KEPT YOU IN THE DARK TOO LONG...
GUESS IT'S TIME YOU FOUND OUT ABOUT... PROJECT FOUR!
BUT WHILE THE BLACK WIDOW'S BURLY CHAUFFEUR RECEIVES A TERSE, INFORMATIVE LECTURE...
...LET US TURN WESTWARD, TO A DESOLATE, LITTLE-FREQUENTED AREA OF SOUTHERN SAN JOAQUIN, WHERE...
OKAY, BERT-- THIS IS THE SPOT--
THAT DETECTOR THE BOSS GAVE US IS WHACKIN' UP A STORM--
SCREEEEEE
--SO, UNLESS THE THING'S BUSTED--
--WE'RE HOME FREE!
DO ME A FAVOR, JACK--
--JUST KEEP YOUR TRAP SHUT, WILLYA?
WHUMP!
IF THERE'S ONE THING I HATE--
--IT'S A JERK WHO MOUTHS OFF DURING WORKING HOURS.

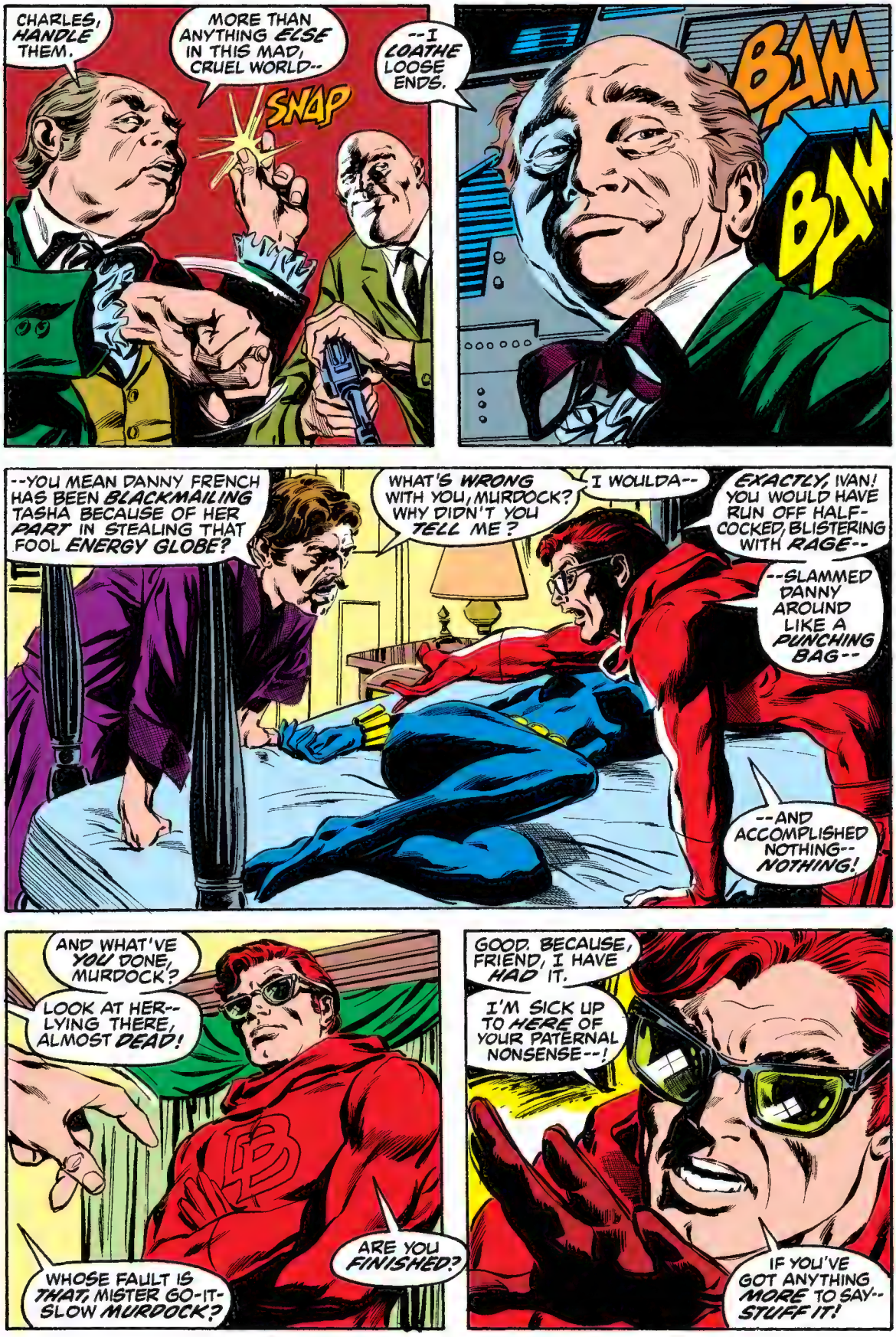

...MAGNIFICENT! GENTLEMEN, YOUR EFFICIENCY SURPASSES MY GREATEST EXPECTATIONS!
I PROMISE YOU--YOU'LL SOON LEARN THE FULL GENEROUSITY--OF DAMON DRAN!
JUST SO LONG AS WE GET PAID, DRAN.
MY PARTNER--HE'S THE CURIOUS TYPE.
ME--ALL I CARE ABOUT'S THE BREAD.


SO I NOTICED, BERTRAM.
BUT PERHAPS YOUR FRIEND WOULD BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING PRECISELY WHAT YOU TWO HAVE RECOVERED.
WILL YOU OBLIGE HIM--MISTER FRENCH?
NOT A... CHANCE, DRAN...

IF YOU WANT YOUR GOONS TO TO KNOW... YOU TELL 'EM.
YOU'RE NOT TURNING ME... INTO A FAWNING ROBOT--
...IT TOOK ALL YOUR BLASTED MACHINES... TO DRAG THE LOCATION OUT OF ME!
--LIKE YOU DID... WITH THE BLACK WIDOW!

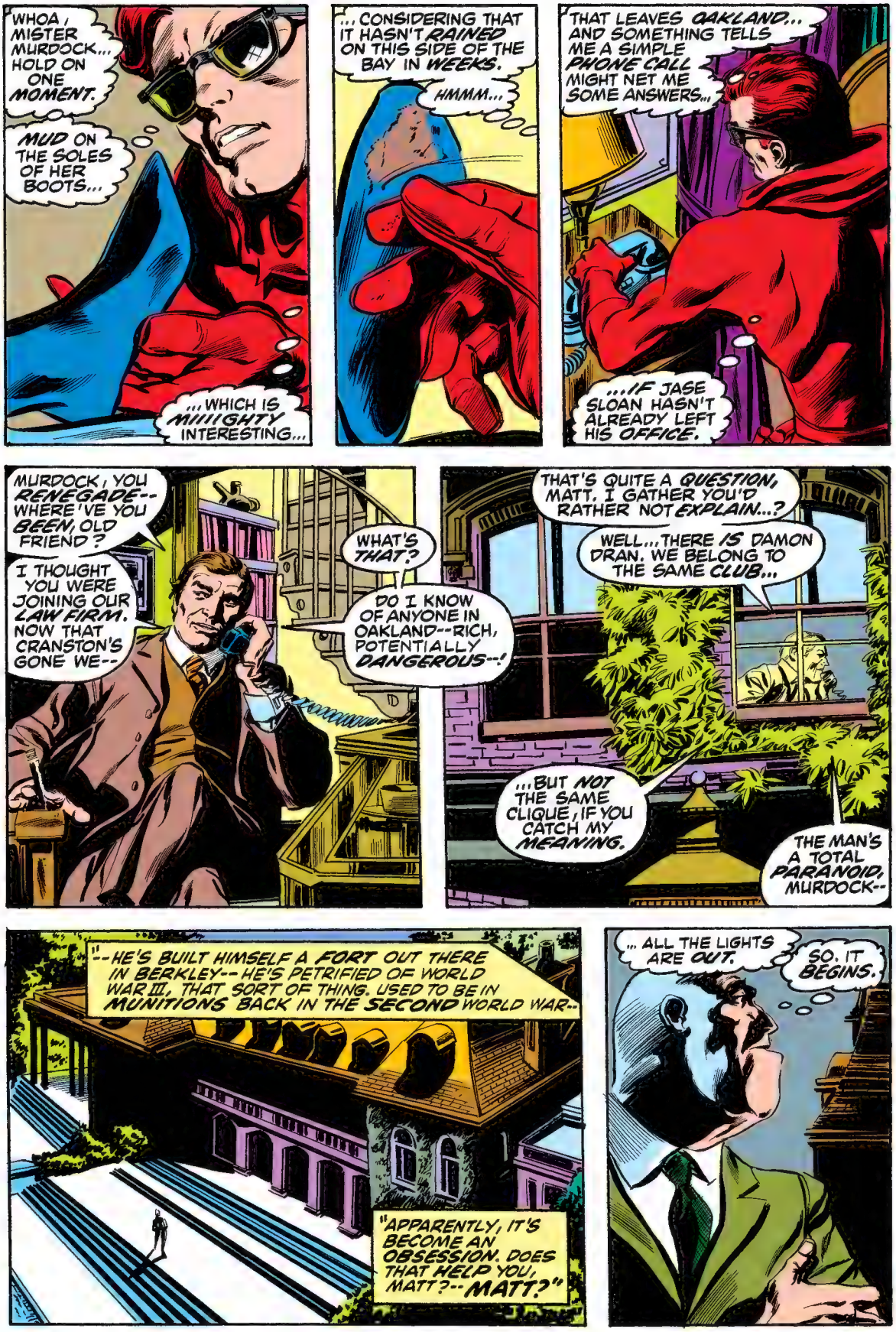

TUT, TUT, DANIEL... SUCH BITTERNESS.
NEED I REMIND YOU THAT YOURS WAS THE HAND WHICH FIRST STOLE YONDER ENERGY GLOBE--
--A HAND WHICH DROPPED GAS CYLINDERS INTO A ROOM FILLED WITH HELPLESS SCIENTISTS--
--AND SO DESTROYED PROJECT FOUR?
BLAST YOU-- I DIDN'T KNOW THEY WERE POISON.
QUITE SO. BUT THE EFFECT REMAINS THE SAME.
YET, I'M AFRAID I BORE OUR GUESTS--

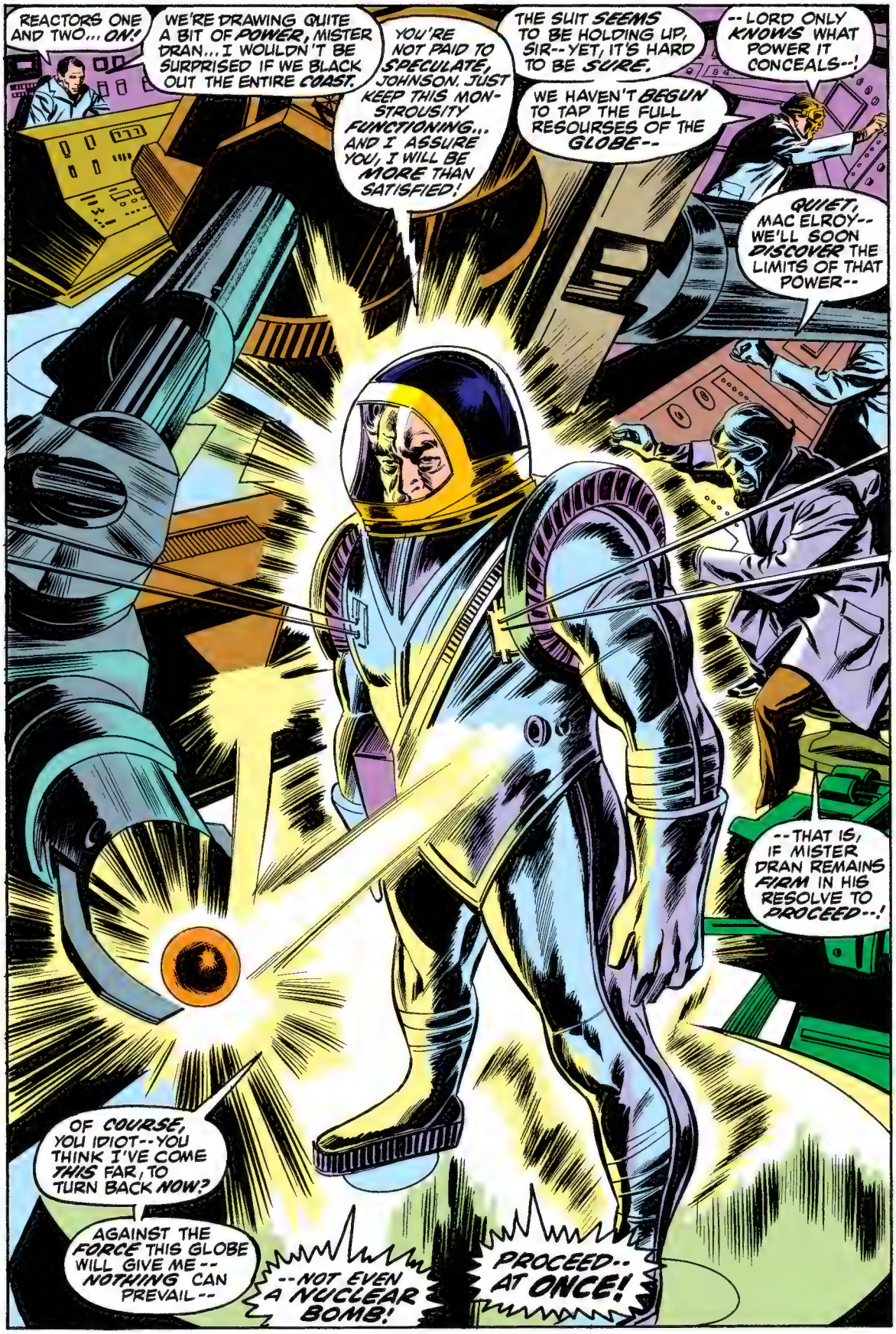
GENTLEMEN, IF YOU'LL WAIT OUTSIDE...
...I'LL SEE TO YOUR... REWARD.
GREAT.

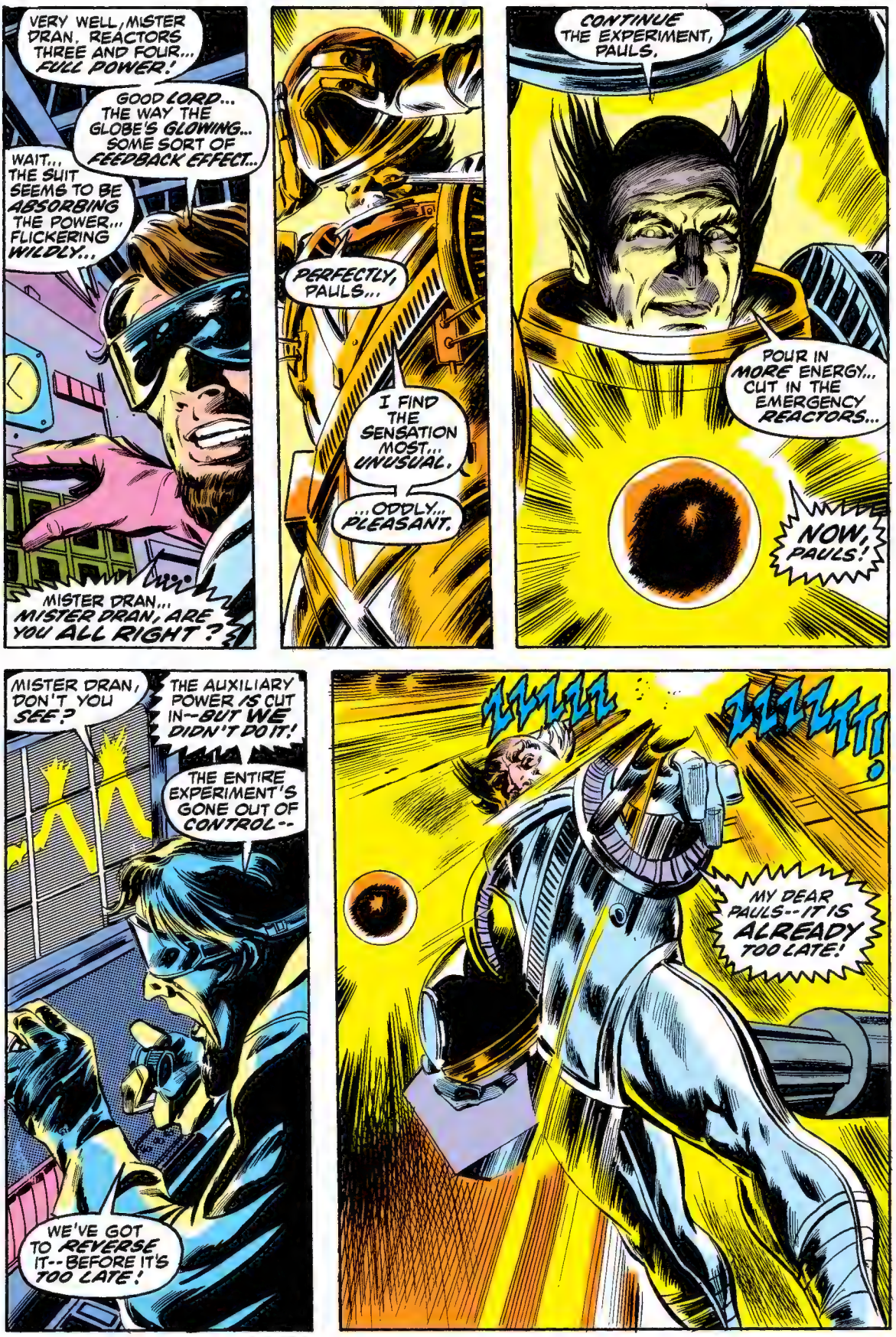

CHARLES, HANDLE THEM.
MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THIS MAD, CRUEL WORLD--
SNAP
--I LOATHE LOOSE ENDS.
BAM
BAM
--YOU MEAN DANNY FRENCH HAS BEEN BLACKMAILING TASHA BECAUSE OF HER PART IN STEALING THAT FOOL ENERGY GLOBE?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, MURDOCK? WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?
I WOULDA--
EXACTLY, IVAN! YOU WOULD HAVE RUN OFF HALF-COCKED, BLISTERING WITH RAGE--
--SLAMMED DANNY AROUND LIKE A PUNCHING BAG--
--AND ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING-- NOTHING!
AND WHAT'VE YOU DONE, MURDOCK?
LOOK AT HER-- LYING THERE, ALMOST DEAD!
WHOSE FAULT IS THAT, MISTER GO-IT-SLOW MURDOCK?
ARE YOU FINISHED?
GOOD. BECAUSE, FRIEND, I HAVE HAD IT.
I'M SICK UP TO HERE OF YOUR PATERNAL NONSENSE--!
IF YOU'VE GOT ANYTHING MORE TO SAY-- STUFF IT!

SLAM!
AT THE SOUND OF THE SLAMMING DOOR, AND THE SUBSEQUENT ECHO OF RECEDING FOOTSTEPS, MATT MURDOCK WINCES--AND ALMOST, HE LEANS FORWARD, WAVERING--
BUT NO; PRIDE TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER FRIENDSHIP, AND--
--WHICH MEANS I'M A THREAT TO SOMEONE'S PLANS.
WHOEVER PUT THAT BOMB IN TASHA'S BELT PACK WANTED US BOTH DEAD--
AND EVEN THOUGH THAT'S FLATTERING, IN AN UNNERVING SORT OF WAY--
--IT MAKES ME HIGHLY CURIOUS! AND WHEN MATTHEW'S CURIOUS--
--HE TAKES ALL KINDS OF RISKS--
--EVEN GOING SO FAR AS WAKING A HYPNOTIZED WILDCAT CALLED THE BLACK WIDOW!
NATASHA, I--
:UNNNNHH!:
CRACK!
YOU--MUST--DIE!
THE MASTER--COMMANDS IT!

SO NOW YOU'RE TALKING, EH, LADY?
THAK!
YOU KNOW-- I ALMOST LIKED IT BETTER WHEN YOU WERE PLAYING DUMB-- AT LEAST THEN I COULD PRETEND--
--I COULD ALMOST FOOL MYSELF YOU WEREN'T THE WOMAN I LOVED--
--BUT NOT NOW--
--WHICH MAKES WHAT I'VE GOT TO DO VERY DIFFICULT--
--BUT FORTUNATELY FOR US BOTH-- NOT QUITE IMPOSSIBLE!
BAK!
STUNNED, THE WIDOW SEEMS TO SHIVER--HER EYES FLICKER AND FOCUS, AND SOMETHING ADJUSTS IN THE COLOR OF IRIS--
THEN...
MATT--?
MATT-- I-I'M-- SORRY--!
SHE PASSED OUT... PROBABLY FROM THE SHOCK OF MY BREAKING THAT TRANCE.
IT'S JUST AS WELL, I SUPPOSE...
MAYBE AFTER SHE'S RESTED, SHE'LL FEEL UP TO TALKING.
IT CAN WAIT...
...I HOPE.


WHOA, MISTER MURDOCK... HOLD ON ONE MOMENT.
MUD ON THE SOLES OF HER BOOTS...
...WHICH IS MIIIIGHTY INTERESTING...
...CONSIDERING THAT IT HASN'T RAINED ON THIS SIDE OF THE BAY IN WEEKS.
HMMM...
THAT LEAVES OAKLAND... AND SOMETHING TELLS ME A SIMPLE PHONE CALL MIGHT NET ME SOME ANSWERS...
...IF JASE SLOAN HASN'T ALREADY LEFT HIS OFFICE.
MURDOCK, YOU RENEGADE-- WHERE'VE YOU BEEN, OLD FRIEND?
I THOUGHT YOU WERE JOINING OUR LAW FIRM. NOW THAT CRANSTON'S GONE WE--
WHAT'S THAT?
DO I KNOW OF ANYONE IN OAKLAND--RICH, POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS--!
THAT'S QUITE A QUESTION, MATT. I GATHER YOU'D RATHER NOT EXPLAIN...?
WELL...THERE IS DAMON DRAN. WE BELONG TO THE SAME CLUB...
...BUT NOT THE SAME CLIQUE, IF YOU CATCH MY MEANING.
THE MAN'S A TOTAL PARANOID, MURDOCK--
"--HE'S BUILT HIMSELF A FORT OUT THERE IN BERKLEY--HE'S PETRIFIED OF WORLD WAR III, THAT SORT OF THING. USED TO BE IN MUNITIONS BACK IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR--
"APPARENTLY, IT'S BECOME AN OBSESSION. DOES THAT HELP YOU, MATT?--MATT?"
... ALL THE LIGHTS ARE OUT.
SO. IT BEGINS.

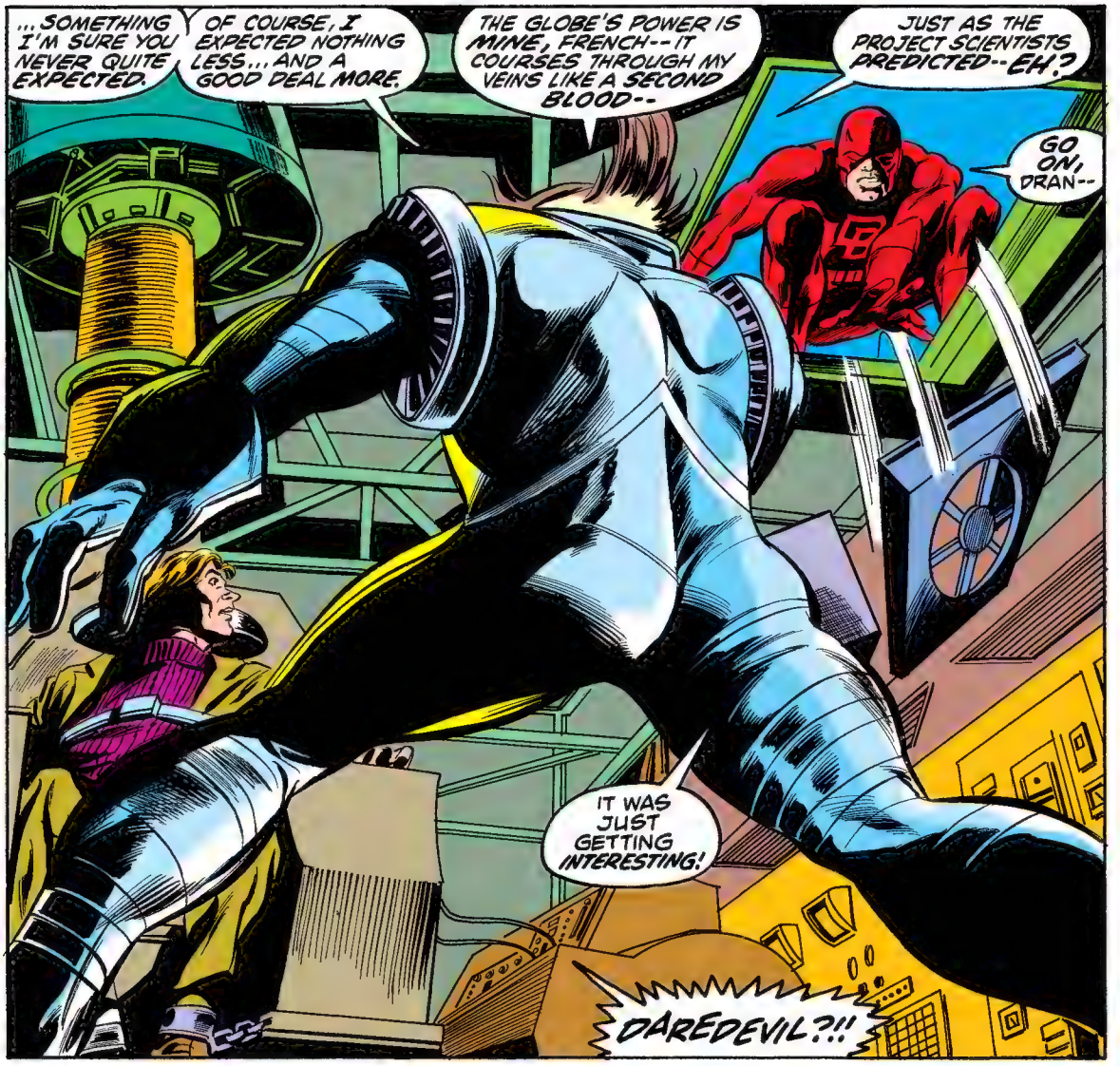

REACTORS ONE AND TWO... ON!
WE'RE DRAWING QUITE A BIT OF POWER, MISTER DRAN... I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF WE BLACK OUT THE ENTIRE COAST.
YOU'RE NOT PAID TO SPECULATE, JOHNSON. JUST KEEP THIS MONSTROSITY FUNCTIONING... AND I ASSURE YOU, I WILL BE MORE THAN SATISFIED!
THE SUIT SEEMS TO BE HOLDING UP, SIR--YET, IT'S HARD TO BE SURE.
--LORD ONLY KNOWS WHAT POWER IT CONCEALS--!
WE HAVEN'T BEGUN TO TAP THE FULL RESOURSES OF THE GLOBE--
QUIET, MAC ELROY-- WE'LL SOON DISCOVER THE LIMITS OF THAT POWER--
--THAT IS, IF MISTER DRAN REMAINS FIRM IN HIS RESOLVE TO PROCEED--!
OF COURSE, YOU IDIOT--YOU THINK I'VE COME THIS FAR, TO TURN BACK NOW?
AGAINST THE FORCE THIS GLOBE WILL GIVE ME-- NOTHING CAN PREVAIL--
--NOT EVEN A NUCLEAR BOMB!
PROCEED.. AT ONCE!

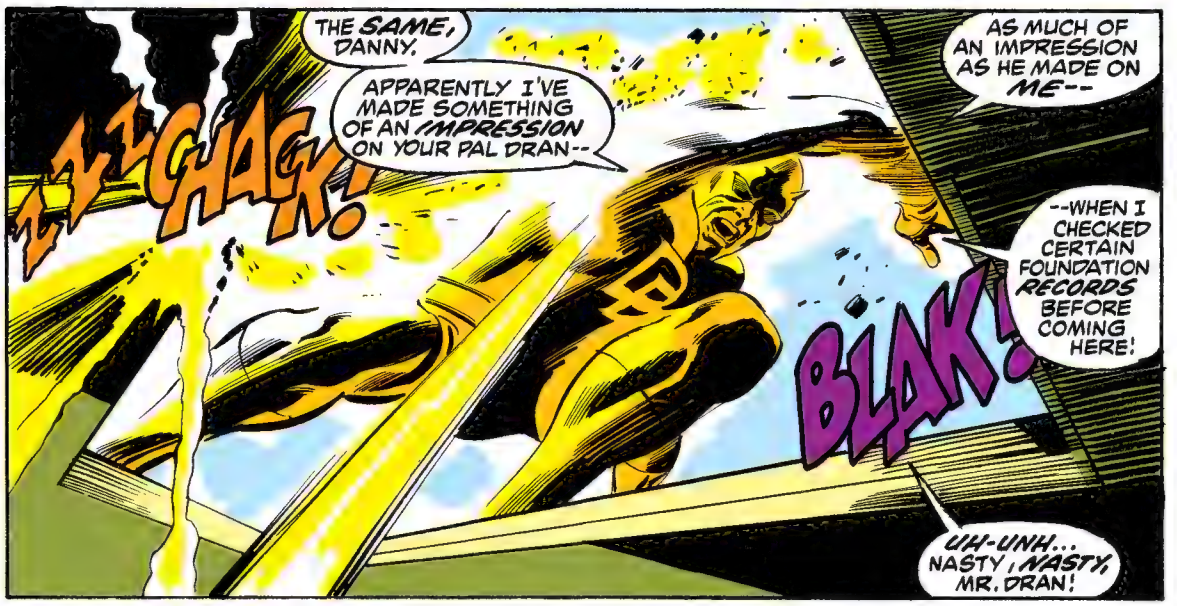

VERY WELL, MISTER DRAN. REACTORS THREE AND FOUR... FULL POWER!
GOOD LORD... THE WAY THE GLOBE'S GLOWING... SOME SORT OF FEEDBACK EFFECT...
WAIT... THE SUIT SEEMS TO BE ABSORBING THE POWER... FLICKERING WILDLY...
MISTER DRAN... MISTER DRAN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
PERFECTLY, PAULS...
I FIND THE SENSATION MOST... UNUSUAL.
...ODDLY... PLEASANT.
CONTINUE THE EXPERIMENT, PAULS.
POUR IN MORE ENERGY... CUT IN THE EMERGENCY REACTORS...
NOW, PAULS!
MISTER DRAN, DON'T YOU SEE?
THE AUXILIARY POWER IS CUT IN--BUT WE DIDN'T DO IT!
THE ENTIRE EXPERIMENT'S GONE OUT OF CONTROL--
WE'VE GOT TO REVERSE IT--BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
ZZZZZ
ZZZZT!
MY DEAR PAULS--IT IS ALREADY TOO LATE!

AND BEFORE THE MAN CALLED PAULS CAN REGISTER MORE THAN SHOCK--AND BRUTAL, AGONIZED SURPRISE--AN AZURE BEAM LANCES FROM THE GLOVED FOREFINGER OF DAMON DRAN--
--A BEAM WHICH GLOWS OF THE SAME UNEARTHLY LIGHT AS THE MYSTERIOUS ENERGY GLOBE--
--AND PRODUCES RESULTS UNEXPECTED, HORRIFYING --AND DEVESTATING!
ONE SPLIT SECOND; TWO--AND IT'S OVER--
--WITHOUT EVEN THE RELEASE-- OF A SCREAM!
POOR PAULS-- SUCH A DISAPPOINTMENT.
SURELY HE DIDN'T BELIEVE I'D INITIATE AN ENTERPRISE OF THIS MAGNITUDE WITHOUT THE PROPER KNOWLEDGE--?
MY RESEARCHS HAVE BEEN COMPLETE-- AND THIS RESULT WAS PRECISELY FOREORDAINED--
FOR I--AND I ALONE--KNOW THE SECRET OF PROJECT FOUR!
EVENTS MOVE QUICKLY, NOW--AND IF A CERTAIN CONFUSION FOLLOWS ON THE HEELS OF SUCH STARTLING REVELATIONS, PLEASE BEAR WITH US! WE PROMISE, IT'S ALL GONNA BE EXPLAINED--!
SO... ALL THIS BELONGS TO DAMON DRAN, EH?
...INCLUDING, I SUPPOSE, THAT TALL FELLA WITH A GUN...
SAY, PAL-- CAN I HAVE A WORD WITH YOUR BOSS?
I REALLY HATE TO BUST IN LIKE THIS AND ALL, BUT I--

UH-HUH!
I THOUGHT SO, CURLY--
BAM
--YOU'RE JUST NOT THE FRIENDLY TYPE, ARE YA?
I WASN'T SURE ABOUT YOUR BOSS TILL NOW--
--BUT NO HONEST MAN NEEDS A HIRED GUNMAN.
THAT MUCH, I KNOW!
I DO NOT WANT TO KILL YOU, MY FRIEND... BUT I HAVE ORDERS WHICH ARE MOST EXPLICIT. NO ONE ENTERS THE HOUSE... NO ONE.'
I AM PAID AN APPRECIABLE SUM TO OBEY THOSE ORDERS.
IT IS NOT A PERSONAL MATTER, YOU UNDERSTAND.
SURE, BUBLA--
I UNDERSTAND!
THE QUESTION IS--
WHAK!

--DO YOU?
BOK!
Y'SEE, MISTER-- WITH ME, IT IS PERSONAL--
SOMEBODY HURT A LADY-FRIEND OF MINE--
--AND THAT SOMEBODY IS GOING TO PAY!
MEANWHILE, SOME THIRTY FEET BELOW, IN A CONCRETE BUNKER BUILT BY DAMON DRAN...
UH-OH...THE SOUNDS'VE STOPPED NEXT DOOR...
DRAN MUST BE FINISHED...
...WHICH MEANS I HAVEN'T GOT MUCH TIME LEFT.
WHEN TASHA AND I BROKE INTO PROJECT FOUR, WE WERE ACTING UNDER ORDERS...
...ORDERS WE DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND...
...AND BECAUSE WE FOLLOWED THOSE ORDERS, SIXTEEN MEN DIED...
I'VE CARRIED THAT GUILT FOR YEARS...
...MAYBE FINALLY I CAN...
FORGET IT, DANNY, THE GAME'S UP...
...AND YOU JUST DREW ACES AND EIGHTS!
AHHH, MISTER FRENCH...
AS YOU CAN SEE, I SURVIVED EXPOSURE TO THE GLOBE...


...SOMETHING I'M SURE YOU NEVER QUITE EXPECTED.
OF COURSE, I EXPECTED NOTHING LESS... AND A GOOD DEAL MORE.
THE GLOBE'S POWER IS MINE, FRENCH--IT COURSES THROUGH MY VEINS LIKE A SECOND BLOOD--
JUST AS THE PROJECT SCIENTISTS PREDICTED--EH?
GO ON, DRAN--
IT WAS JUST GETTING INTERESTING!
DAREDEVIL?!!


THE SAME, DANNY.
APPARENTLY I'VE MADE SOMETHING OF AN IMPRESSION ON YOUR PAL DRAN--
AS MUCH OF AN IMPRESSION AS HE MADE ON ME--
--WHEN I CHECKED CERTAIN FOUNDATION RECORDS BEFORE COMING HERE!
CHAGK!
BLAK!
UH-UNH... NASTY, NASTY, MR. DRAN!

I FOUND OUT SOME *FASCINATING* THINGS, MR. DRAN--

--FOR ONE, PROJECT FOUR WAS *NOT* GOVERNMENT-FINANCED--SOMETHING I THINK BOTH DANNY AND NATASHA *SUSPECTED* WHEN THEY DIDN'T RECOGNIZE THE GUARD'S *UNIFORM!* *

THUMP!

--SOMEONE WHO *DIRECTED* THE FIELD OF RESEARCH, KEEPING IT NARROW--AND *SPECIFIC*--

FOR ANOTHER, THE PROJECT HAD A *SECRET* BENEFACTOR--

ZZZAK!

* ANYONE HERE REMEMBER TASHA'S *FLASHBACK* IN ISSUE #90? IF YOU DO--GO TO THE HEAD OF THE *CLASS*, HERO! --ROY.

YOU WANTED *POWER*, DRAN--POWER TO MAKE YOURSELF *INDESTRUCTIBLE*--INVULNERABLE TO THE WAR YOU CEASELY *PREDICT*--

--AND WHICH YOUR *WEAPONS* WILL HELP MAKE *POSSIBLE!*

SPRANG

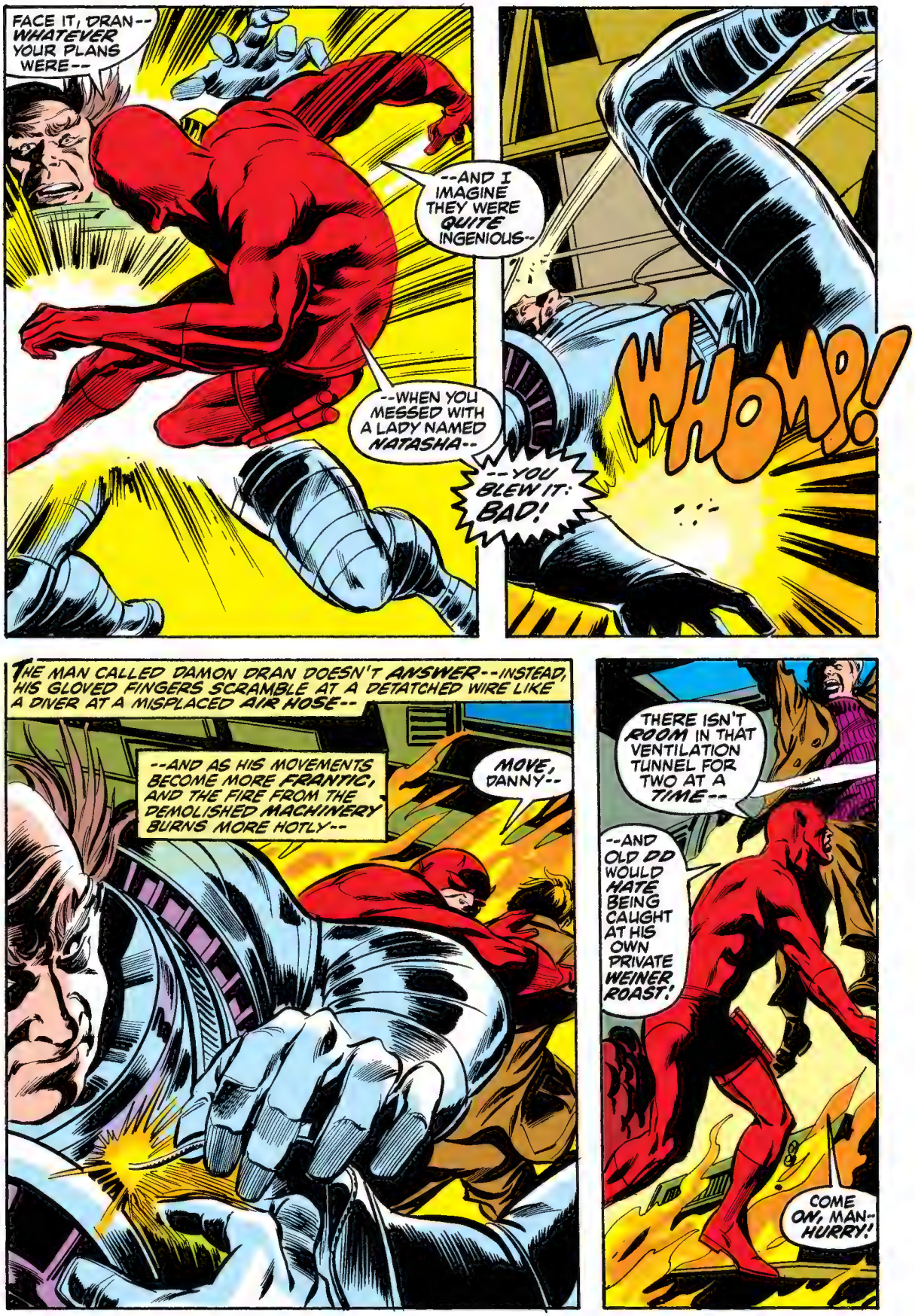
WHAP!

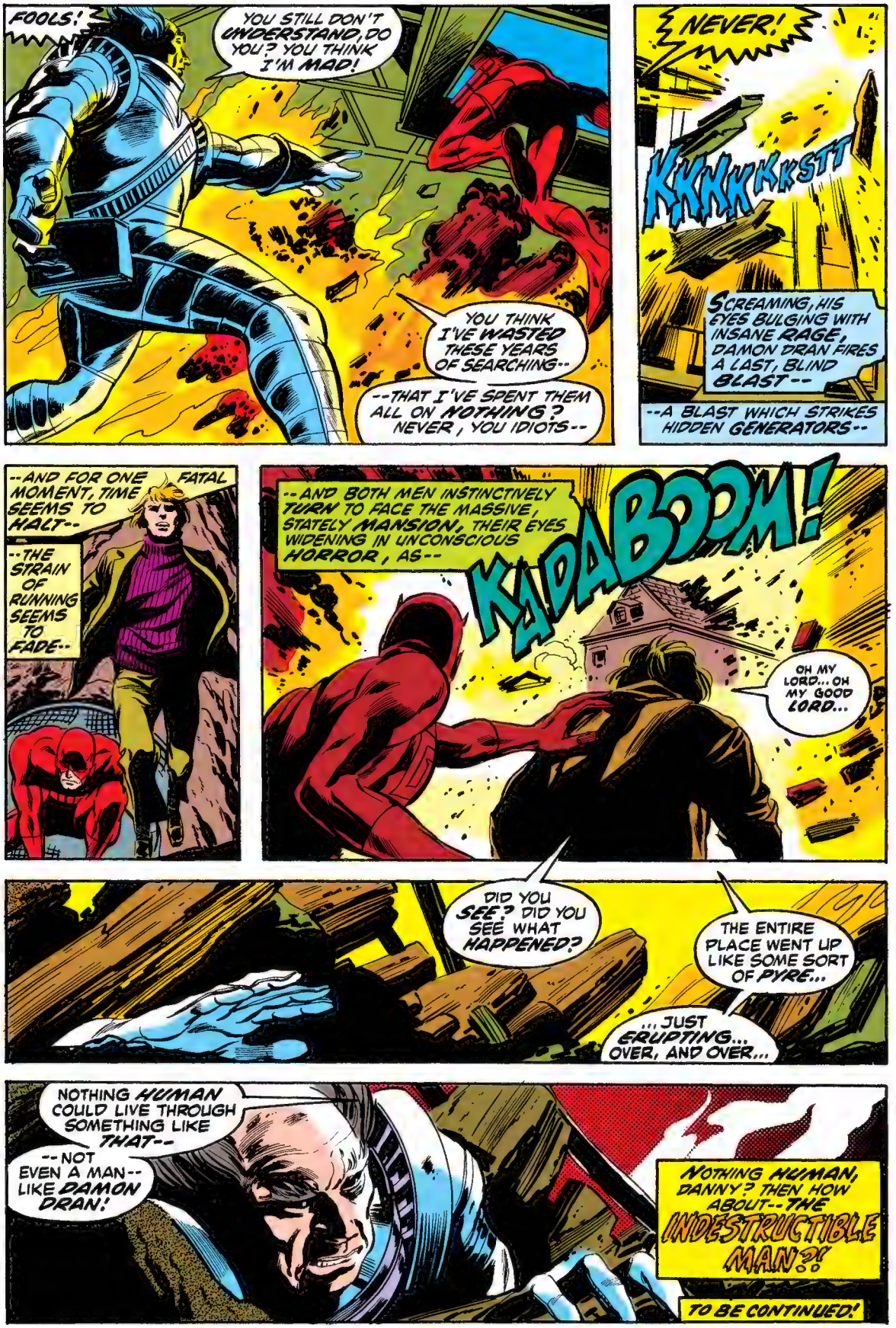
GUO!

BRAK!

DO I NEED TO TELL DANNY JUST *WHO* THAT "*SECRET BENEFACTOR*" WAS, DRAN--

--OR WILL YOU JUST *ADMIT*--IT WAS *YOU!*


FACE IT, DRAN-- WHATEVER YOUR PLANS WERE--
--AND I IMAGINE THEY WERE QUITE INGENIOUS--
--WHEN YOU MESSED WITH A LADY NAMED NATASHA--
--YOU BLEW IT: BAD!
WHOMP!
THE MAN CALLED DAMON DRAN DOESN'T ANSWER--INSTEAD, HIS GLOVED FINGERS SCRAMBLE AT A DETATCHED WIRE LIKE A DIVER AT A MISPLACED AIR HOSE--
--AND AS HIS MOVEMENTS BECOME MORE FRANTIC, AND THE FIRE FROM THE DEMOLISHED MACHINERY BURNS MORE HOTLY--
MOVE, DANNY--
THERE ISN'T ROOM IN THAT VENTILATION TUNNEL FOR TWO AT A TIME--
--AND OLD DD WOULD HATE BEING CAUGHT AT HIS OWN PRIVATE WEINER ROAST!
COME ON, MAN-- HURRY!


FOOLS!
YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, DO YOU? YOU THINK I'M MAD!
YOU THINK I'VE WASTED THESE YEARS OF SEARCHING--
--THAT I'VE SPENT THEM ALL ON NOTHING? NEVER, YOU IDIOTS--
NEVER!
K'KKK K'KSTT
SCREAMING, HIS EYES BULGING WITH INSANE RAGE, DAMON DRAN FIRES A LAST, BLIND BLAST--
--A BLAST WHICH STRIKES HIDDEN GENERATORS--
--AND FOR ONE FATAL MOMENT, TIME SEEMS TO HALT--
--THE STRAIN OF RUNNING SEEMS TO FADE--
--AND BOTH MEN INSTINCTIVELY TURN TO FACE THE MASSIVE, STATELY MANSION, THEIR EYES WIDENING IN UNCONSCIOUS HORROR, AS--
KYDABOOM!
OH MY LORD... OH MY GOOD LORD...
DID YOU SEE? DID YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENED?
THE ENTIRE PLACE WENT UP LIKE SOME SORT OF PYRE...
...JUST ERUPTING... OVER, AND OVER...
NOTHING HUMAN COULD LIVE THROUGH SOMETHING LIKE THAT--
--NOT EVEN A MAN--LIKE DAMON DRAN!
NOTHING HUMAN, DANNY? THEN HOW ABOUT--THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN?!
TO BE CONTINUED!

DAREDEVIL
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DEC
02459
DAREDEVIL
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW
I AM BACK, AGAIN-- BIGGER-- STRONGER THAN EVER!
AND THIS TIME NOTHING CAN STOP ME!
RE-ENTER--THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN!
HE COULD CRUSH THE WORLD!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™

MOMENTS AGO, THEY LEFT HIM FOR DEAD-- FOR SURELY NO LIVING MAN COULD SURVIVE SUCH A DEVASTATING EXPLOSION.
MOMENTS AGO, THEY THOUGHT OF HIM ONLY AS DAMON DRAN-- A MANIACAL MUNITIONS EXPERT, A GENIUS AT ORGANIZATION--
-- A GENIUS, IT SEEMS, AT OTHER THINGS, AS WELL!
DAREDEVIL! IT--IT ISN'T POSSIBLE--BUT IT'S TRUE!
SOMEHOW DRAN'S MADE HIMSELF TOTALLY INVULNERABLE-- NOTHING CAN STOP HIM--NOTHING CAN SLOW HIM DOWN!
HE'S THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN--AND...
HE CAN CRUSH THE WORLD!

STAN LEE PRESENTS: GERRY CONWAY, SCRIPTER / GENE COLAN, ARTIST / TOM PALMER, EMBELLISHER / JOHN COSTANZA, Letterer / ROY THOMAS, EDITOR

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AND I WILL CRUSH IT, MISTER FRENCH--
--TRULY FREE FROM THE TERRORS OF THEIR PETTY WARFARE!
FOR ONLY BY REDUCING HUMANITY TO THE LEVEL OF CRINGING SLAVES MAY I FIND MYSELF TRULY SAFE--
AND I SHALL BEGIN THAT SUBJUGATION--
--WITH YOU!
BAWHUMP!
TIME TO MOVE, DANNY.
OUR FORMER HOST'S BECOMING SLIGHTLY UNFRIENDLY--
--AND SINCE I'VE NEVER BEEN THE SORT OF GUY TO OVERSTAY A WELCOME--
--LET'S YOU AND ME TAKE A RIDE ON MY HANDY LITTLE BILLY CLUB, HMMM?
WHATEVER YOU SAY, DD.
RIGHT NOW, PAL--
--I'D FOLLOW YOU ANYWHERE--
--AND IT'S NOT JUST BECAUSE OF YOUR PRETTY FACE!

WHY, MISTER FRENCH-- I DO DECLARE YOU'LL TURN MY HEAD!
JUST SO LONG AS YOU KEEP WATCHING WHERE YOU'RE GOING, DAREDEVIL.
I'M NOT EXACTLY USED TO THESE AERIAL ACROBATICS.
YOU THINK I AM?
UH-OH... WE'D BETTER CUT DOWN ON THE FLIPPANCY, FRENCH.
DRAN LOOKS KINDA MAD--
GUESS HE DIDN'T SEE WHERE WE WENT.
AND I'M CERTAINLY GOING TO TRY AND KEEP IT THAT WAY!
DRAN'S GROWING MORE THAN EVER-- ALMOST JAMMING MY RADAR-VISION--
IT'S THAT ENERGY GLOBE-- ITS POWER'S GONE WILD!
BETTER BELIEVE IT, DD--
NOW THAT DRAN'S HARNESSED THE SECRET OF PROJECT FOUR--
--HE'S GONNA KEEP ON GETTING STRONGER--
--AND NOBODY'S GONNA BE ABLE TO STOP HIM--
NOT NOW-- NOT EVER!
YET EVEN AS OUR BLIND HERO AND HIS LESS-THAN-OPTIMISTIC COMPANION RETURN THEIR ATTENTION TO THE RAGING DAMON DRAN--
--LET'S TURN OURS TO A SCENE ONE HALF HOUR LATER, IN A SECLUDED MANSION NEAR SAN FRANCISCO'S NORTH SHORE, WHERE, IN THE DARKNESS OF A HUMID GARAGE--
--A MAN NAMED IVAN OCCUPIES A SEETHING MIND WITH CERTAIN UNNECESSARY REPAIRS.

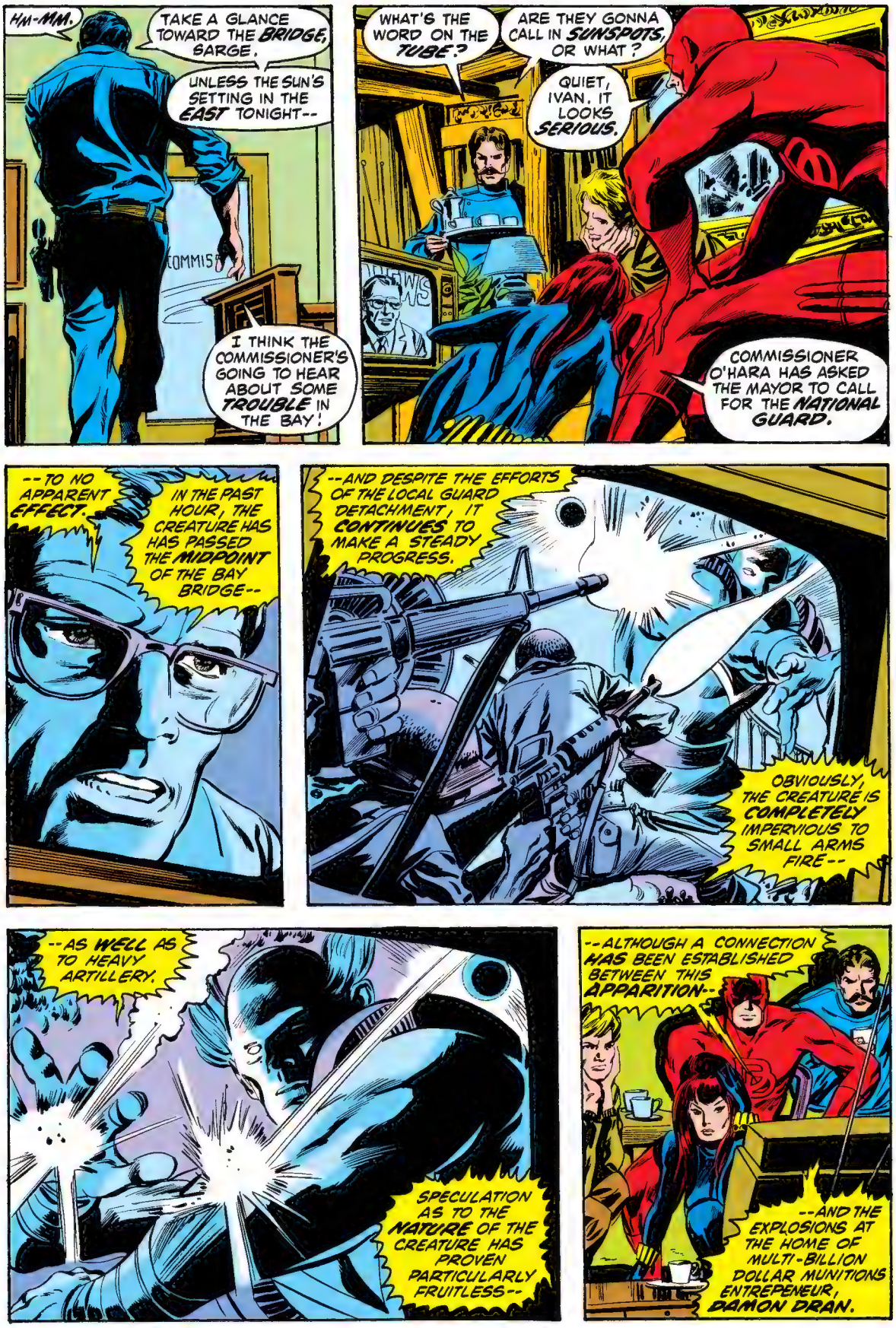
THE MINUTES FLOW BY INEXORABLY, BROKEN ONLY BY THE CLATTER OF METAL TOOLS, UNTIL--
CLICK!
NATASHA! WHAT D'YA THINK YOU'RE DOING DOWN HERE, LITTLE CZARINA?
AFTER WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH, YOU OUGHT TO BE IN BED--
TASHA?
IVAN... I'VE GOT TO GO TO HIM... HE NEEDS ME...
...I KNOW... HE NEEDS ME...
GIVE ME... MY CAR, IVAN... I'VE GOT TO...
YOU'VE GOT TO DO NOTHING BUT REST, TASHA.
C'MON, LET ME GET YOU BACK UPSTAIRS.
NO, IVAN. I'M... ALL RIGHT, NOW.
YOU MUST LET ME-- THAT SOUND--
BUMP! THUMP!
SOMEBODY'S IN THE LIVING ROOM.
MAYBE WE'D BETTER POSTPONE THIS DISCUSSION FOR LATER, SISTER--
--'CAUSE I'VE GOT A FEELIN' YOUR BLASTED HERO'S ALREADY HOME.
IVAN... NATASHA. GOOD. MATT MURDOCK ISN'T HERE, THEN--IS HE?
THERE'S SOMEONE WHO'D LIKE TO MEET HIM, I THINK...
DANNY FRENCH!
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH ABOUT YOU TO KNOW YOU ANYWHERE, CREEP--

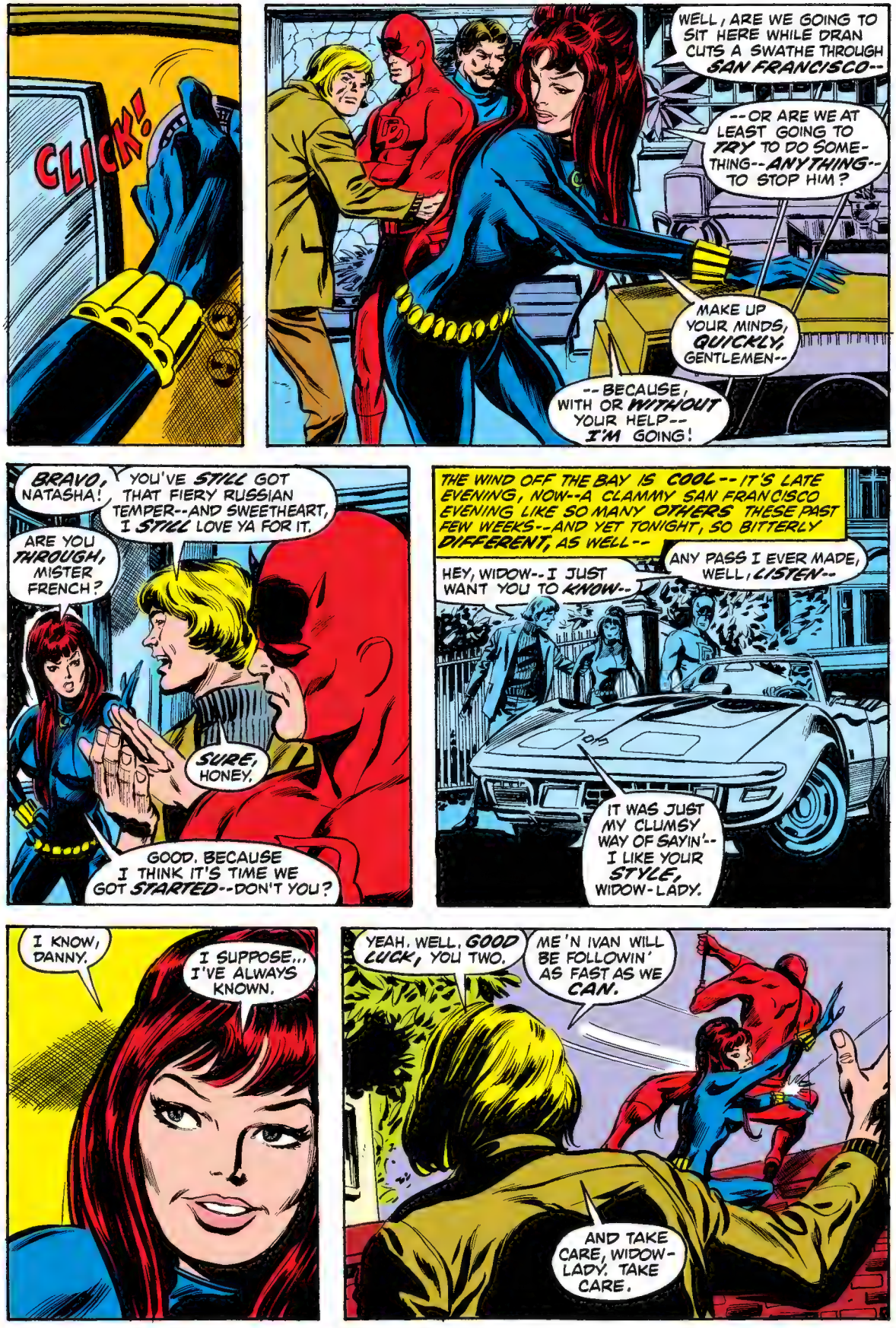
--AN' NOW YOU 'N ME ARE GONNA HAVE OURSELVES A FRIENDLY LITTLE TALK--!
HOLD IT, IVAN. WE HAVEN'T GOT TIME FOR ANGER!
WE'VE GOT TROUBLE, MISTER--BIG TROUBLE.
THIS GUY DRAN--WHO KIDNAPPED THE BLACK WIDOW AND DANNY IN THE FIRST PLACE--
--HE'S MADE HIMSELF INDESTRUCTIBLE --AND LORD ONLY KNOWS WHAT HIS PLANS ARE NOW.
SO WE'VE GOT TO FACE THIS THING TOGETHER--
WE NEED DANNY FOR HIS KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE GLOBE--
--AND NO MATTER WHAT HE TRIED TO DO TO NATASHA--
WE'VE GOT TO BE ALLIES--OR ELSE WE'RE DEAD--
ALL OF US.
Y'KNOW, FRED--SOMETIMES I WONDER WHAT I DID TO DESERVE THE OAKLAND BRIDGE PATROL.
I MEAN, THERE'S GOTTA BE A REASON, YOU KNOW?
BE QUIET WHILE I MAKE MY REPORT, WILL YOU, GREG?
THE PROBLEM WITH YOU ROOKIES IS, YOU ALL THINK YOU'RE STEVE MCQUEEN.
HEY, SARGE--903 REPORTING. NOTHING NEW..
THIS PLACE IS ABOUT AS EXCITING AS A GRAVEYARD.
BE GRATEFUL YOU'RE NOT UP NEAR NORTHERN BERKELEY, 903--
FROM WHAT WE HEAR, THINGS ARE HAPPENING NEAR THE OLD DRAN MANSION--
--903--ARE YOU READING ME?

NO, SERGEANT, THEY AREN'T READING YOU.
THEIR THOUGHTS ARE SOMEWHAT DISTRACTED, AT THE MOMENT-- OCCUPIED WITH SHOCKED AMAZEMENT AT THE SCENE FORMING BUT A HUNDRED YARDS BEHIND THEIR PARKED PATROL CAR--
-- A SCENE OUT OF SOME MAD-MAN'S CONCEPTION OF HELL--
104
-- A VISION WHICH MAKES ONE MAN CRY OUT IN HELPLESS CONSTERNATION--
--AND THE OTHER REMAIN WORDLESS-- FROZEN WITH FEAR!

THEN, SUDDENLY, THEIR REFLEXES TAKE COMMAND--
ALL REMAINING HESITATION DISSOLVED, AND THEY LEAP INTO SILENT ACTION--
--UNTHINKING ACTION, AS IT TURNS OUT, WITH CERTAIN LESS-THAN-NOBLE EFFECTS.
903... 903... BLAST IT, ARE YOU RECEIVING ME?
ANSWER ME, 903! ANSWER ME!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BUT THE MEN OF SFPD CAR 903 HAVE NO TIME FOR ANSWERS--
BARAAMM!
--THEY HAVE TIME ONLY TO FIGHT--AS BEST THEY CAN--
--AND TO WONDER--WHAT INSANITY HAVE THEY STUMBLED INTO?
GREG--KEEP THAT HEAD DOWN, MAN!
WHATEVER THAT BLASTED THING IS--IT'S GOT SOME SORT OF ENERGY-WEAPON--
--AN' IT'S POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DESTROY THE ENTIRE OAKLAND BAY BRIDGE!
STAY LOW, MISTER--STAY LOW!

TO WHAT PURPOSE WOULD I CONSECRATE SUCH ACTION, MY FRIEND ?
DESTROYING THE BRIDGE WOULD ONLY SEPARATE ME FROM MY GOAL--
--FOR ONLY IN SAN FRANCISCO WILL THE DECISIVE BATTLE BE FOUGHT--
--THE FIRST OF MANY BATTLES IN THIS WAR--FOR A WORLD!
YOU WERE SAYIN' SOMETHIN' ABOUT DULL, GREG?
DON'T REMIND ME, FRED... PLEASE, JUST DON'T REMIND ME.
SOMETHING UP, SARGE ?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU JUST SWALLOWED A LEMON.
LIEUTENANT CARSON, I ASK YOU--AM I HARD TO GET ALONG WITH ?
NOT THAT I'VE NOTICED. WHY ?
BUNKER AND HARRIS IN 903 JUST CUT ME OFF--
PD
AND I'M THINKING: MAYBE I SAID SOMETHING TO MAKE THEM ANGRY--
I DOUBT IT, SARGE.
IT'S PROBABLY JUST A MALFUNCTION OF SOME SORT--EH?
SAY, SARGE,.. WHERE IS 903 LOCATED ANYWAY ?
IN OAKLAND, LIEUTENANT. YOU KNOW THAT.


HM-MM.
TAKE A GLANCE TOWARD THE BRIDGE, BARGE.
UNLESS THE SUN'S SETTING IN THE EAST TONIGHT--
I THINK THE COMMISSIONER'S GOING TO HEAR ABOUT SOME TROUBLE IN THE BAY!
WHAT'S THE WORD ON THE TUBE?
ARE THEY GONNA CALL IN SUNSPOTS, OR WHAT?
QUIET, IVAN. IT LOOKS SERIOUS.
COMMISSIONER O'HARA HAS ASKED THE MAYOR TO CALL FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD.
--TO NO APPARENT EFFECT.
IN THE PAST HOUR, THE CREATURE HAS HAS PASSED THE MIDPOINT OF THE BAY BRIDGE--
--AND DESPITE THE EFFORTS OF THE LOCAL GUARD DETACHMENT, IT CONTINUES TO MAKE A STEADY PROGRESS.
OBVIOUSLY, THE CREATURE IS COMPLETELY IMPERVIOUS TO SMALL ARMS FIRE--
--AS WELL AS TO HEAVY ARTILLERY.
SPECULATION AS TO THE NATURE OF THE CREATURE HAS PROVEN PARTICULARLY FRUITLESS--
--ALTHOUGH A CONNECTION HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THIS APPARITION--
--AND THE EXPLOSIONS AT THE HOME OF MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR MUNITIONS ENTREPENEUR, DAMON DRAN.

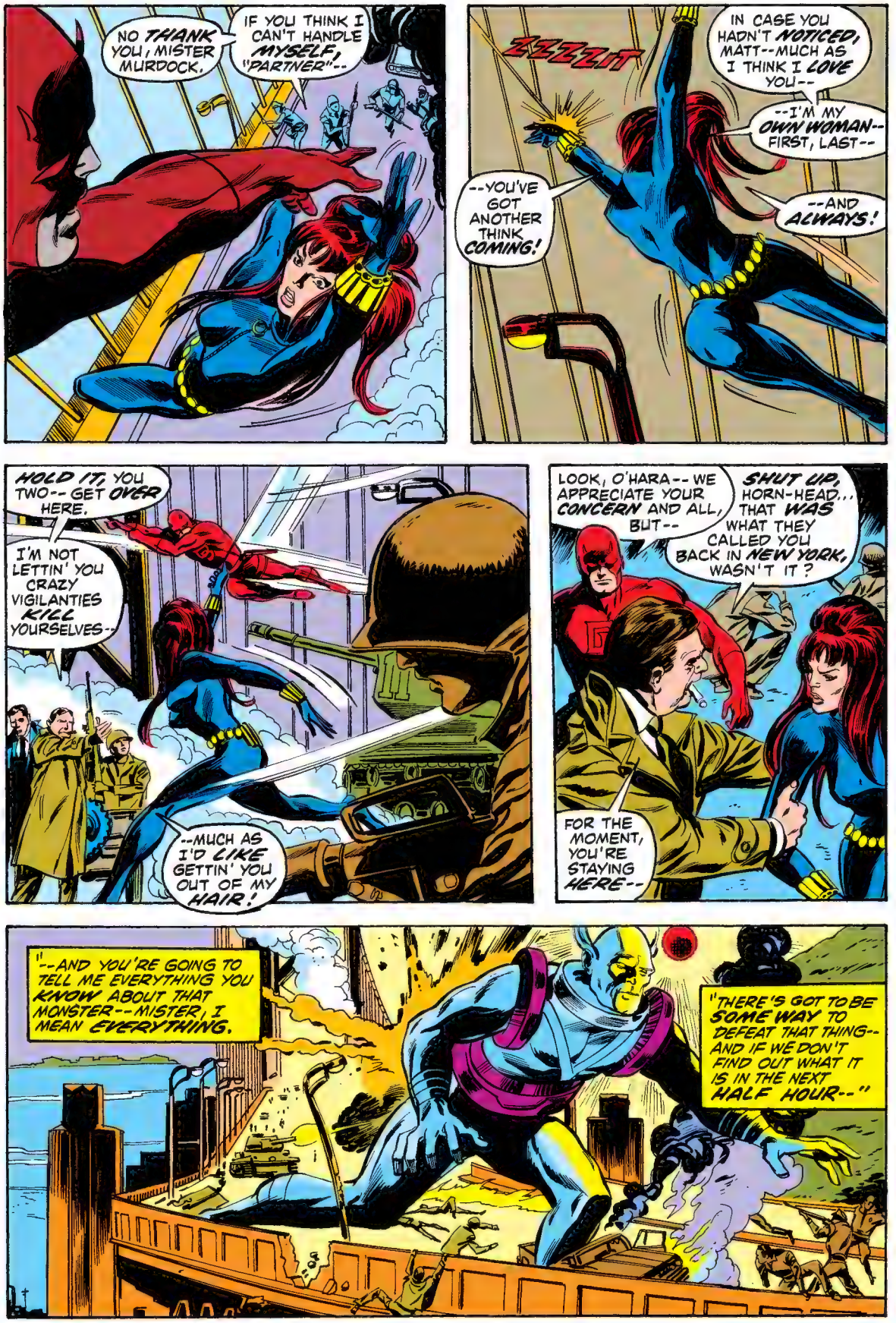

CLICK!
WELL, ARE WE GOING TO SIT HERE WHILE DRAN CUTS A SWATHE THROUGH SAN FRANCISCO--
--OR ARE WE AT LEAST GOING TO TRY TO DO SOMETHING--ANYTHING--TO STOP HIM?
MAKE UP YOUR MINDS, QUICKLY, GENTLEMEN--
--BECAUSE, WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR HELP--I'M GOING!
BRAVO, NATASHA!
YOU'VE STILL GOT THAT FIERY RUSSIAN TEMPER--AND SWEETHEART, I STILL LOVE YA FOR IT.
ARE YOU THROUGH, MISTER FRENCH?
SURE, HONEY.
GOOD. BECAUSE I THINK IT'S TIME WE GOT STARTED--DON'T YOU?
THE WIND OFF THE BAY IS COOL--IT'S LATE EVENING, NOW--A CLAMMY SAN FRANCISCO EVENING LIKE SO MANY OTHERS THESE PAST FEW WEEKS--AND YET TONIGHT, SO BITTERLY DIFFERENT, AS WELL--
HEY, WIDOW--I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW--
ANY PASS I EVER MADE, WELL, LISTEN--
IT WAS JUST MY CLUMSY WAY OF SAYIN'--I LIKE YOUR STYLE, WIDOW-LADY.
I KNOW, DANNY.
I SUPPOSE... I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN.
YEAH. WELL, GOOD LUCK, YOU TWO.
ME 'N IVAN WILL BE FOLLOWIN' AS FAST AS WE CAN.
AND TAKE CARE, WIDOW-LADY. TAKE CARE.

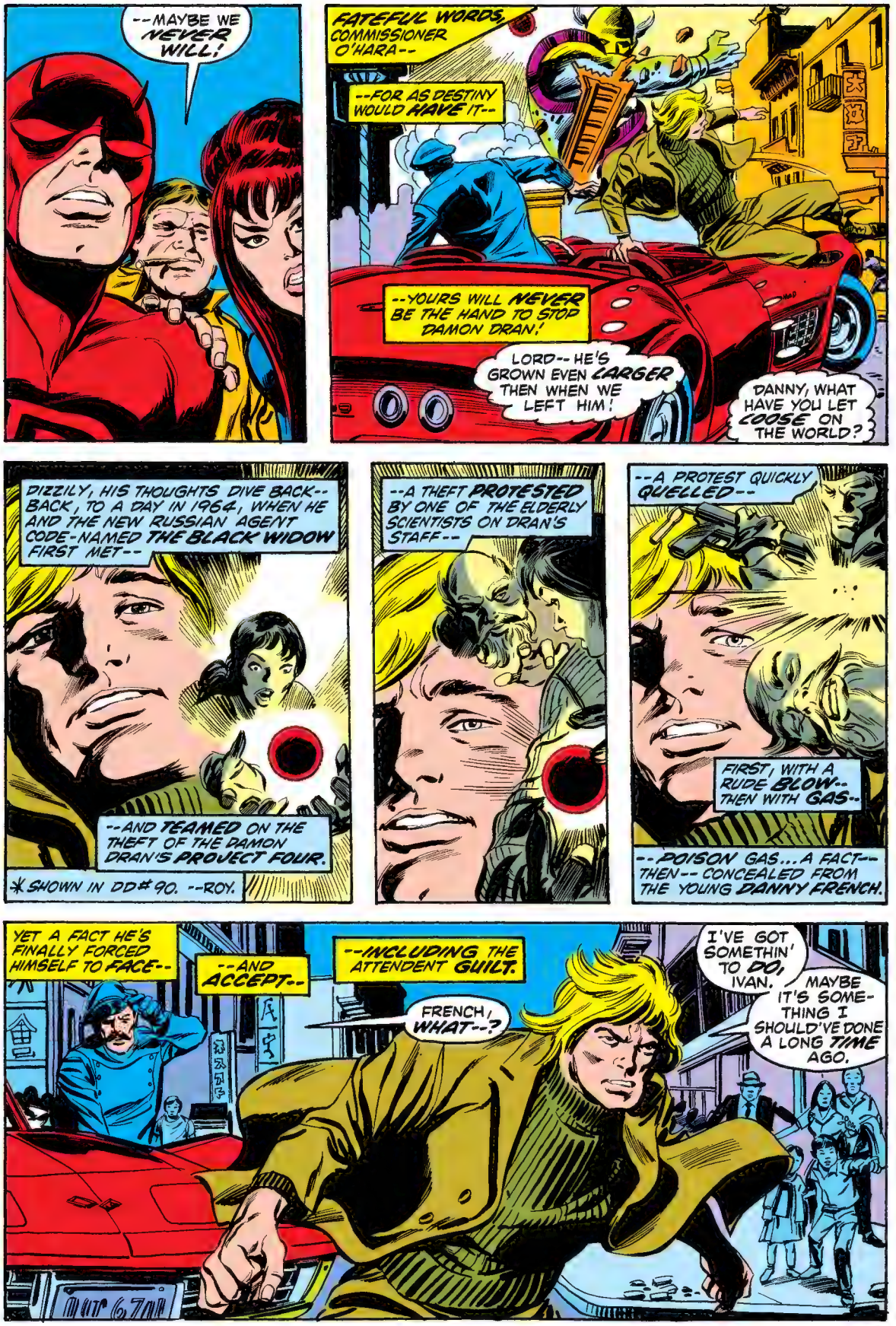
DON'T COOK AT ME LIKE THAT, YOU BLASTED UKRANIAN.
JUST SHUT UP AND DRIVE.
AND AS THE TWO FORCED ALLIES HEAD SOUTH TOWARD THE BESIEGED BRIDGE, LET'S TAKE A FANCIFUL LEAP AHEAD OF THEM--
--TO THE TRANSFORMED GIANT ONCE CALLED DAMON DRAN--
--WHO, LIKE SOME MODERN-DAY ACHILLES, STRIKES--
--BUT REMAINS-- UNSTRUCK!
WITH EACH STEP, HE MOVES CLOSER TO THE SAN FRANCISCAN EXIT--YET EACH STEP IS A PONDEROUS ONE--FOR, WITH HIS INCREASED SIZE, HE'S GAINED AN INCREASED MASS--
KKKREAK!
CRUNCH!
--A MASS SUPPORTED BY THE INEXHAUSTIBLE POWER--OF PROJECT FOUR!
CARSON, LOOKS LIKE YOU WEREN'T KIDDING WHEN YOU TOLD ME WE HAD SOME TROUBLE OUT HERE
KEE-RIPES,,, WILL YOU LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT THING?
STILL THINK YOUR MEN CAN HANDLE IT, SOLDIER?
DO WE HAVE A CHOICE, COMMISSIONER?
TANKS SIX AND NINE... MOVE FORWARD ONE HUNDRED FEET...
...AND ON MY COMMAND...

...FIRE!
WHHUM!
CAP'N, IT'S JUST NO GOOD!
THE BRIDGE SUPPORTS ARE WEAKENING--
--AN' WE CAN'T BUDGE 'IM!
BUT OURS ARE THE ONLY EARS WHICH HEAR THE CONCERNED CORPORAL'S WORDS--FOR, NOT ONLY ARE THEY COST IN THE ENSUING GUNFIRE--
--THEY ARE IGNORED, AS WELL, BY THE ONE MAN WHO MIGHT BE MOST INTERESTED IN HEARING THEM--
--FOR THE MIND AND THOUGHTS OF DAMON DRAN ARE AN UNMEASURABLE DISTANCE AWAY--LOST, IN DREAMS OF THE DAY BEYOND TOMORROW--
--A DAY WHEN DAMON DRAN TOWERS OVER ALL OF SAN FRANCISCO--UNREACHABLE, UNTOUCHABLE--WAITING, TO PROVE FOR THE FIRST--AND POSSIBLY THE FINAL TIME--
BANK OF ERICA

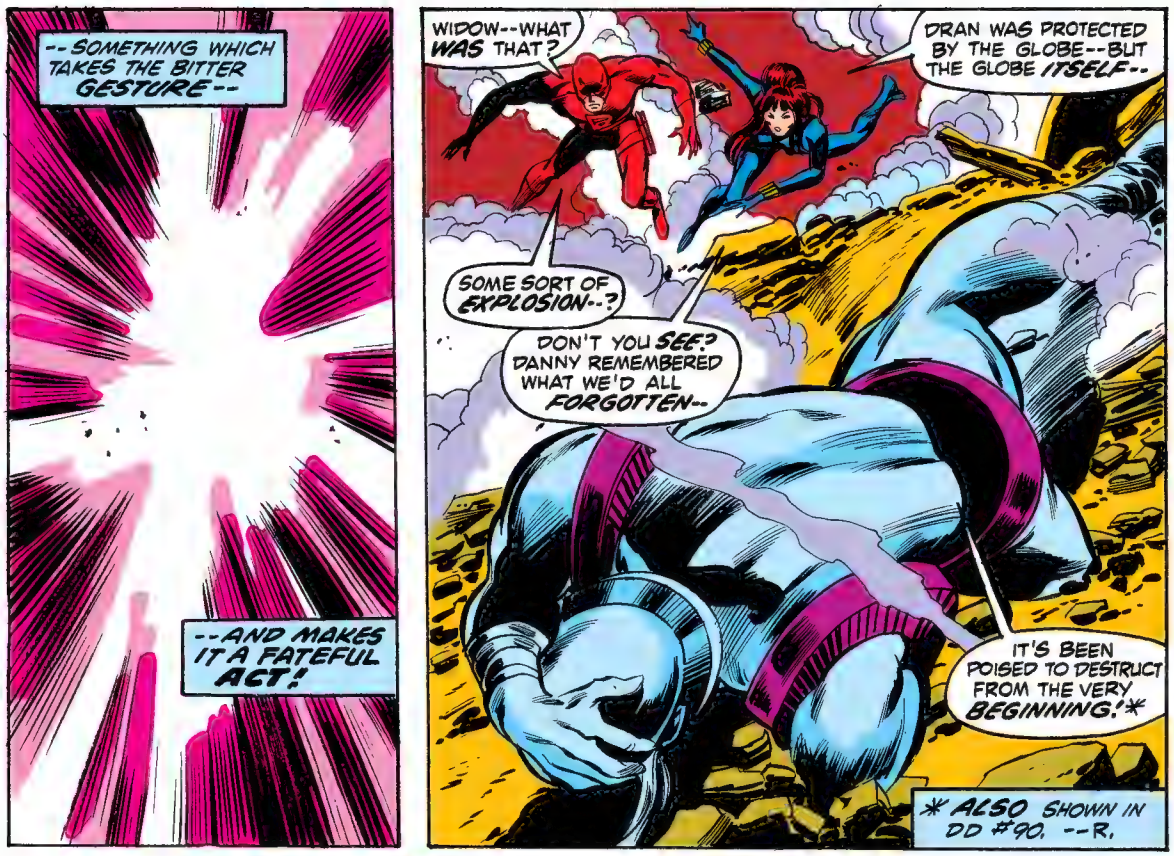
--NOTHING CAN STOP-- THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN!
FROM THIS THOUGHT, HIS MIND LEAPS TO OTHER THINGS -- TO THE POWER THAT SOON WILL BE HIS-- CONTROL HE'S ALWAYS CRAVED, BUT WHICH NEVER SEEMED POSSIBLE BEFORE--
--AND NOW EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE--
EVERY-THING.
SUDDENLY, HIS THOUGHTS ARE DISTURBED BY A SOUND--A FAMILIAR, STARTLING VOICE--
HEADS UP, MR. DRAN--WE'VE A SCORE TO SETTLE--
--AND I THINK I'LL START--
--WITH A BLAST FROM MY WIDOW'S STING!
A FUTILE GESTURE, AT BEST.
--ONE YOU'LL SOON REGRET, MY DEAR!
CHUNK!
--IT'S THE BLASTED PRINCIPLE OF THE THINNNNNGH!
FOOL! PRINCIPLES ARE USEFUL ONLY FOR EPITHETS--
BUT ACTIONS, MY FRIEND--ACTIONS COMMAND!
OH, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT, DAMON OL' CHUM.
IT'S NOT REALLY THE EFFECT, YOU SEE --

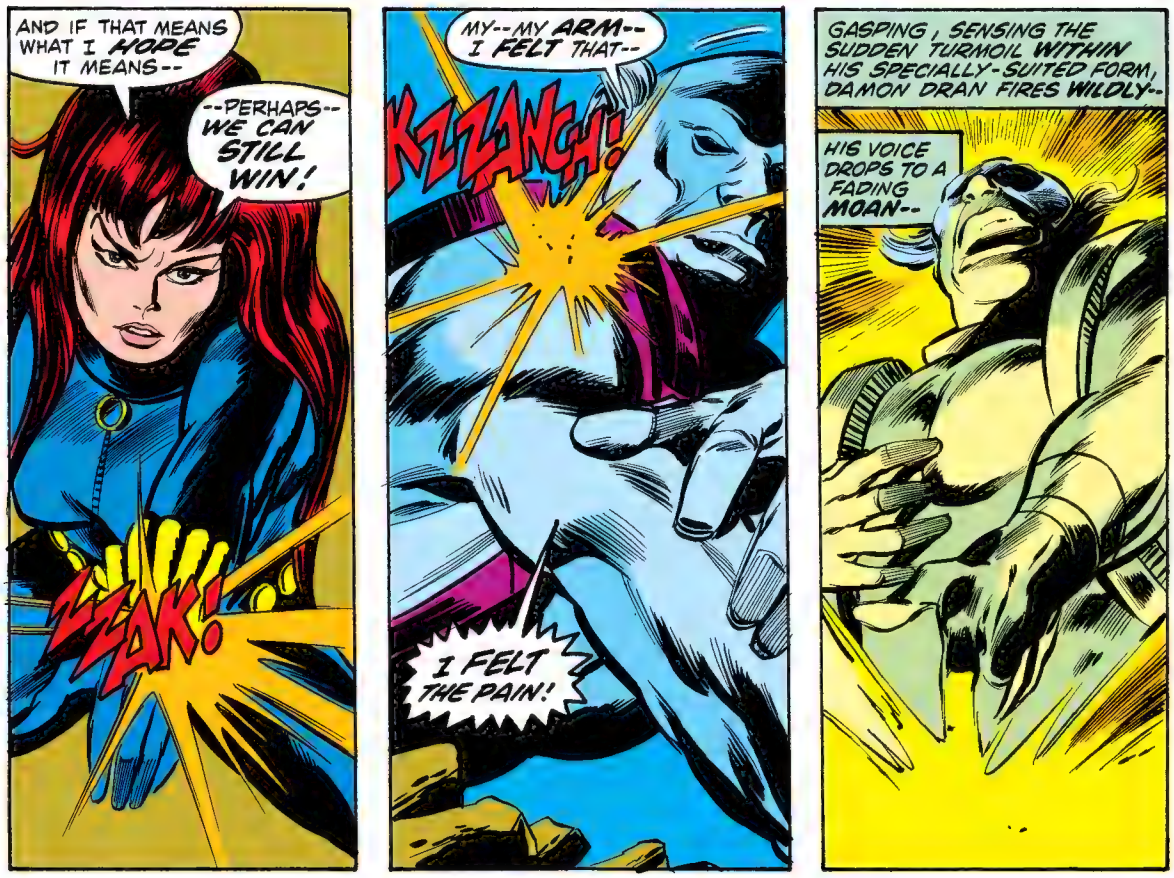
HEY, CAN I WRITE THAT DOWN, FELLA?
STATEMENTS LIKE THAT ALWAYS AMUSE ME--ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY COME FROM A GUY LIKE YOU--
--A MAN WHO SPENT TWENTY-ODD YEARS OF HIS LIFE AVOIDING ACTION--
--HYSTERICALLY AFRAID THAT THE ARMS-RACE YOUR WEAPONS MADE POSSIBLE--
--WOULD END IN THE NUCLEAR WAR YOU ALWAYS FEARED--
--BUT NEVER TRIED TO ABORT!
DAREDEVIL'S RIGHT! INSTEAD OF HELPING TO AVERT ATOMIC CATASTROPHE--
--YOU SOUGHT TO ESCAPE IT-- FIRST BY ORDERING THE CONSTRUCTION OF PROJECT FOUR--
--THEN BY FINALLY USING THE PROJECT'S ENERGY GLOBE-- TO MAKE YOURSELF A THING OUTSIDE THE REST OF HUMANITY!
ALL TRUE, MY DEAR BLACK WIDOW.
IT'S WHY I KIDNAPPED YOU AND FRENCH-- WHEN I LEARNED THAT YOU TWO HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE THEFT OF THE GLOBE SO MANY YEARS AGO--
YET YOU MISS ONE SALIENT POINT, MADAME NATASHA. I AM NOT OUTSIDE THE HUMAN RACE--
TWIK!
RATHER-- ABOVE IT!
EASY, GIRL-- RELAX.
DON'T FIGHT ME, SISTER... I'VE GOT YOU!


NO THANK YOU, MISTER MURDOCK.
IF YOU THINK I CAN'T HANDLE MYSELF, "PARTNER"--
ZZZZIT
IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, MATT--MUCH AS I THINK I LOVE YOU--
--I'M MY OWN WOMAN-- FIRST, LAST--
--AND ALWAYS!
--YOU'VE GOT ANOTHER THINK COMING!
HOLD IT, YOU TWO-- GET OVER HERE.
I'M NOT LETTIN' YOU CRAZY VIGILANTIES KILL YOURSELVES--
--MUCH AS I'D LIKE GETTIN' YOU OUT OF MY HAIR!
LOOK, O'HARA-- WE APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN AND ALL, BUT--
SHUT UP, HORN-HEAD... THAT WAS WHAT THEY CALLED YOU BACK IN NEW YORK, WASN'T IT?
FOR THE MOMENT, YOU'RE STAYING HERE--
"--AND YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT MONSTER--MISTER, I MEAN EVERYTHING.
"THERE'S GOT TO BE SOME WAY TO DEFEAT THAT THING-- AND IF WE DON'T FIND OUT WHAT IT IS IN THE NEXT HALF HOUR--"

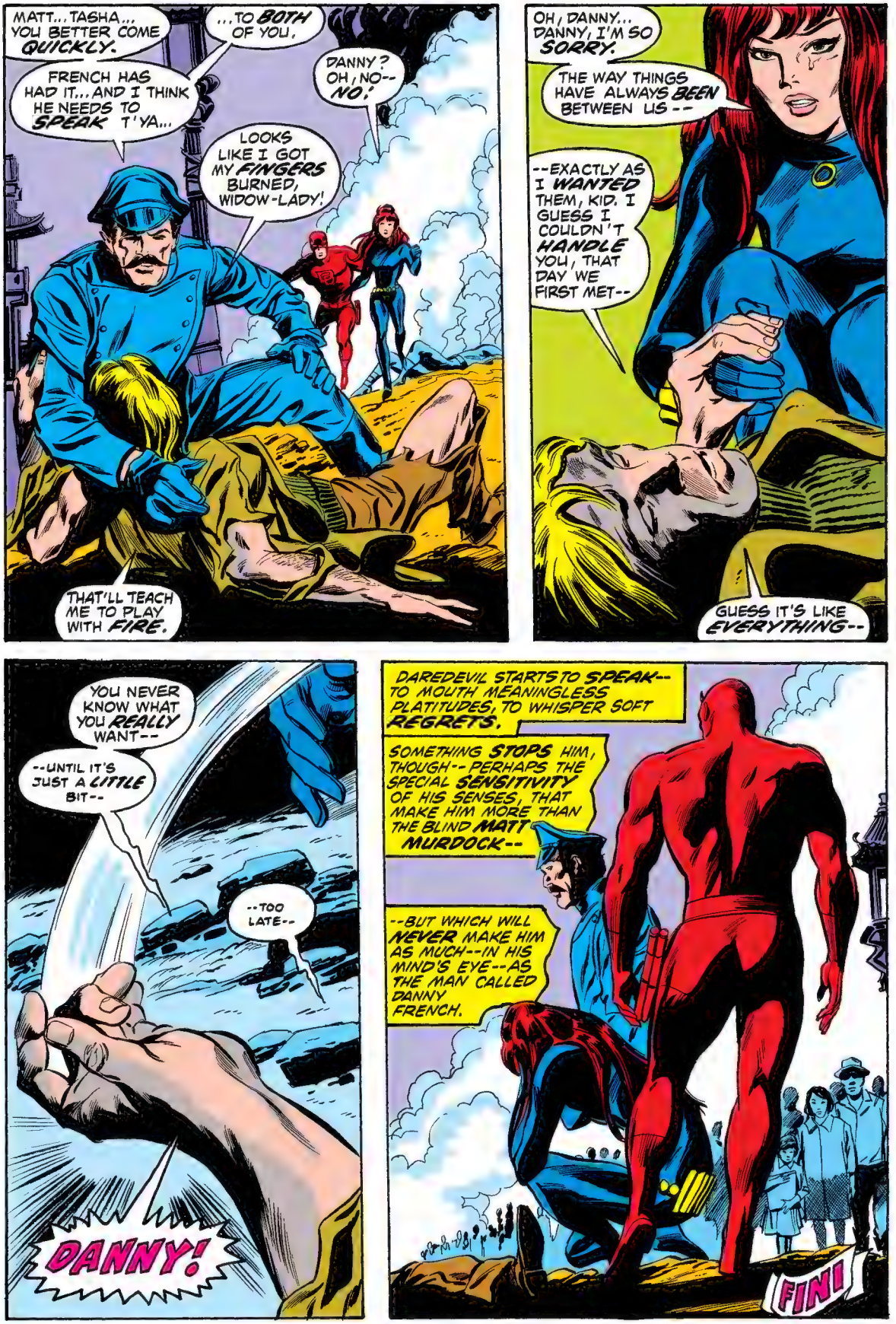

--MAYBE WE NEVER WILL!
FATEFUL WORDS, COMMISSIONER O'HARA--
--FOR AS DESTINY WOULD HAVE IT--
--YOURS WILL NEVER BE THE HAND TO STOP DAMON DRAN!
LORD-- HE'S GROWN EVEN LARGER THEN WHEN WE LEFT HIM!
DANNY, WHAT HAVE YOU LET LOOSE ON THE WORLD?
DIZZILY, HIS THOUGHTS DIVE BACK-- BACK, TO A DAY IN 1964, WHEN HE AND THE NEW RUSSIAN AGENT CODE-NAMED THE BLACK WIDOW FIRST MET--
--AND TEAMED ON THE THEFT OF THE DAMON DRAN'S PROJECT FOUR.
*SHOWN IN DD # 90. --ROY.
--A THEFT PROTESTED BY ONE OF THE ELDERLY SCIENTISTS ON DRAN'S STAFF--
--A PROTEST QUICKLY QUELLED--
FIRST, WITH A RUDE BLOW-- THEN WITH GAS--
--POISON GAS... A FACT-- THEN-- CONCEALED FROM THE YOUNG DANNY FRENCH.
YET A FACT HE'S FINALLY FORCED HIMSELF TO FACE--
--AND ACCEPT--
--INCLUDING THE ATTENDENT GUILT.
FRENCH, WHAT--?
I'VE GOT SOMETHIN' TO DO, IVAN.
MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING I SHOULD'VE DONE A LONG TIME AGO.

I'VE HAD QUITE A FEW INTERESTING JOBS IN MY LIFE --
FREE-LANCE SPY-- A BLACKMAILING DETECTIVE-- AND ONCE OR TWICE, FOR KICKS, SOMETHING HONEST.
AND YOU KNOW SOMETHING, IVAN?
I'D CHUCK IT ALL FOR A FEW FRIENDLY LAUGHS--JUST TO KNOW I'VE TOUCHED SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE.
YEAH, I UNDER-STAND THAT, NOW.
TOO BAD IT'S COME SO LATE. I'D NEVER GAIN THE NECESSARY TRUST...
...IN MYSELF... IN ME, DANNY FRENCH, BOY-IDEALIST-TURNED-BAD.
GUESS IT'S TIME FOR A GESTURE--
--AND MAYBE THIS TIME, I'LL DO IT RIGHT!
THE UNEXPECTED--
IN THE MIDST OF AN ACT OF FRUSTRATION, A STROKE OF CHANCE--
OR IS IT CHANCE WHICH GUIDES THE AIM OF DANNY FRENCH? MIGHT IT NOT BE SOMETHING MORE--


--SOMETHING WHICH TAKES THE BITTER GESTURE--
--AND MAKES IT A FATEFUL ACT!
WIDOW--WHAT WAS THAT?
DRAN WAS PROTECTED BY THE GLOBE--BUT THE GLOBE ITSELF--
SOME SORT OF EXPLOSION--?
DON'T YOU SEE? DANNY REMEMBERED WHAT WE'D ALL FORGOTTEN--
IT'S BEEN POISED TO DESTRUCT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING!*
* ALSO SHOWN IN DD #90. --R.


AND IF THAT MEANS WHAT I HOPE IT MEANS--
--PERHAPS-- WE CAN STILL WIN!
ZZAK!
MY--MY ARM-- I FELT THAT--
KZZANG!
I FELT THE PAIN!
GASPING, SENSING THE SUDDEN TURMOIL WITHIN HIS SPECIALLY-SUITED FORM, DAMON DRAN FIRES WILDLY--
HIS VOICE DROPS TO A FADING MOAN--

--AND HE BEGINS--
--TO FEEL HIMSELF--
--CHANGING!
MY BODY-- SHRINKING-- SHRIVELING-- ALL THE POWER, DRAINING FROM ME--
DAREDEVIL-- YOU MUST-- YOU MUST HELP ME--
I-I CAN'T-- CAN'T STAND ANY LONGER--
THROK!
THEN, LIE DOWN, DRAN.
YOU'LL GET USED TO THE SEDENTARY WAY OF LIFE--
YOU'D BETTER-- ONCE YOU'RE IN PRISON!
BUT THEN--THE JOCULARITY VANISHES--
RADAR SENSES REVEAL A FINAL TRANSFORMATION--
--A FINAL--AND FATAL ONE.
WITHIN SHORT MOMENTS, DAMON DRAN IS CONSUMED BY THE ENERGY HE SOUGHT TO CONTROL--
--AND THOSE WHO WATCH--AND HE WHO ONLY SENSES--ARE FORCED, TOWARD THE END, TO TURN GRIMLY AWAY.


MATT... TASHA... YOU BETTER COME QUICKLY.
...TO BOTH OF YOU.
FRENCH HAS HAD IT... AND I THINK HE NEEDS TO SPEAK T'YA...
DANNY? OH, NO-- NO!
LOOKS LIKE I GOT MY FINGERS BURNED, WIDOW-LADY!
THAT'LL TEACH ME TO PLAY WITH FIRE.
OH, DANNY... DANNY, I'M SO SORRY.
THE WAY THINGS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN BETWEEN US--
--EXACTLY AS I WANTED THEM, KID. I GUESS I COULDN'T HANDLE YOU, THAT DAY WE FIRST MET--
GUESS IT'S LIKE EVERYTHING--
YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU REALLY WANT--
--UNTIL IT'S JUST A LITTLE BIT--
--TOO LATE--
DANNY!
DAREDEVIL STARTS TO SPEAK-- TO MOUTH MEANINGLESS PLATITUDES, TO WHISPER SOFT REGRETS.
SOMETHING STOPS HIM, THOUGH-- PERHAPS THE SPECIAL SENSITIVITY OF HIS SENSES, THAT MAKE HIM MORE THAN THE BLIND MATT MURDOCK--
--BUT WHICH WILL NEVER MAKE HIM AS MUCH--IN HIS MIND'S EYE--AS THE MAN CALLED DANNY FRENCH.
FINI

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
20¢
95
JAN
02459
DAREDEVIL®
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW™
YOU HURT MAN-BULL-- MADE PEOPLE PUT HIM IN PRISON--
--AND NOW-- YOU MUST PAY!!
NO PARKING
5TH AVE
THE MAN-BULL MAKES HIS MOVE!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™

BULLFIGHT ON THE BAY!

DAILY NEWS 10

NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER

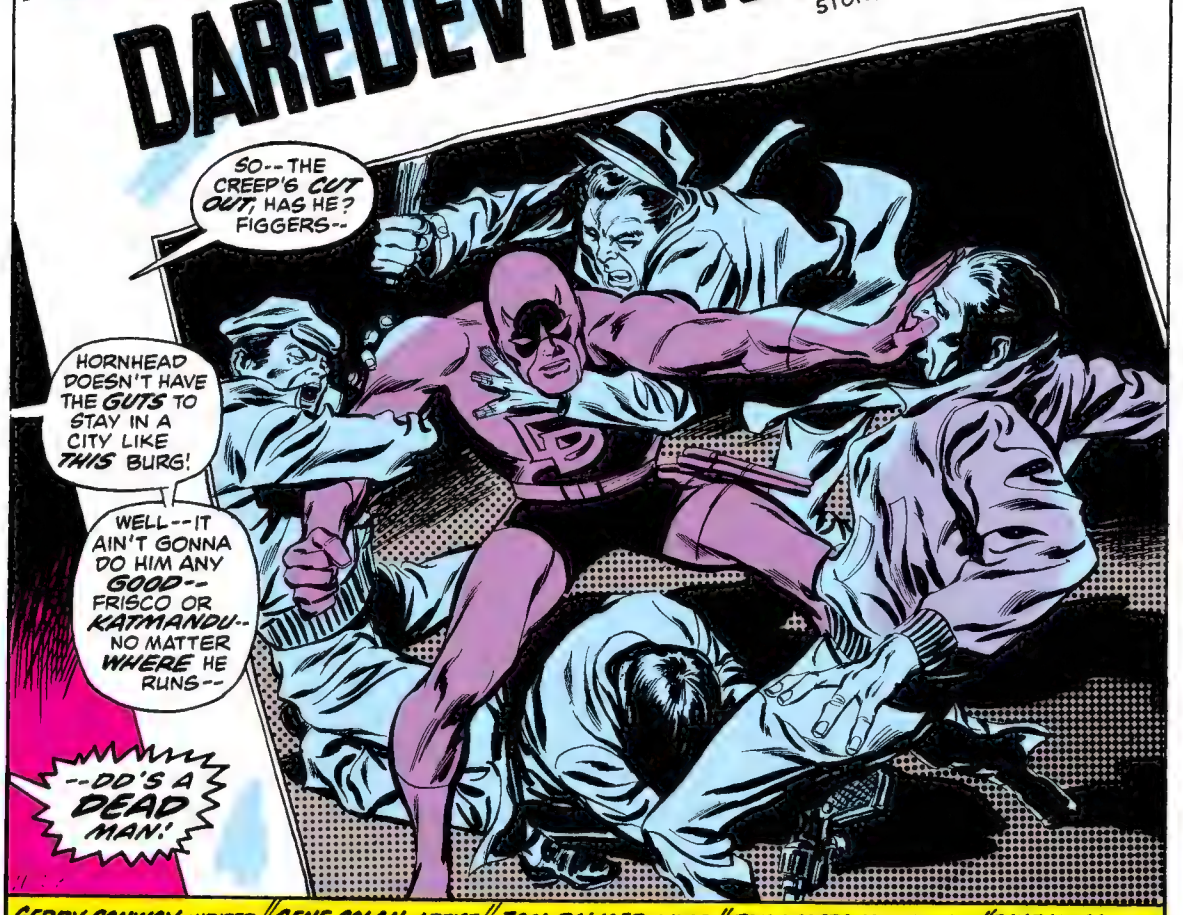
STARTING THIS MONDAY... A NEWS SERIES BY SERGIUS O'SHAUGHNESSY "THE ARMY AND THE KNIGHT."

EDITORIAL ON PAGE 6

VOL. 59 No. 303 COPY. 1972 JAMESON PUB. CO. NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022, TUESDAY, OCT. 3, 1972 WEATHER: PARTLY CLOUDY, TEMPERTURE: ~

DAREDEVIL IN FRISCO

STORY ON PAGE 9


SO--THE CREEP'S CUT OUT, HAS HE? FIGGERS--
HORNHEAD DOESN'T HAVE THE GUTS TO STAY IN A CITY LIKE THIS BURG!
WELL--IT AIN'T GONNA DO HIM ANY GOOD-- FRISCO OR KATMANDU-- NO MATTER WHERE HE RUNS--
--DD'S A DEAD MAN!

GERRY CONWAY, WRITER // GENE COLAN, ARTIST // TOM PALMER, INKER // JOHN COSTANZA, LETTERER // ROY THOMAS, EDITOR

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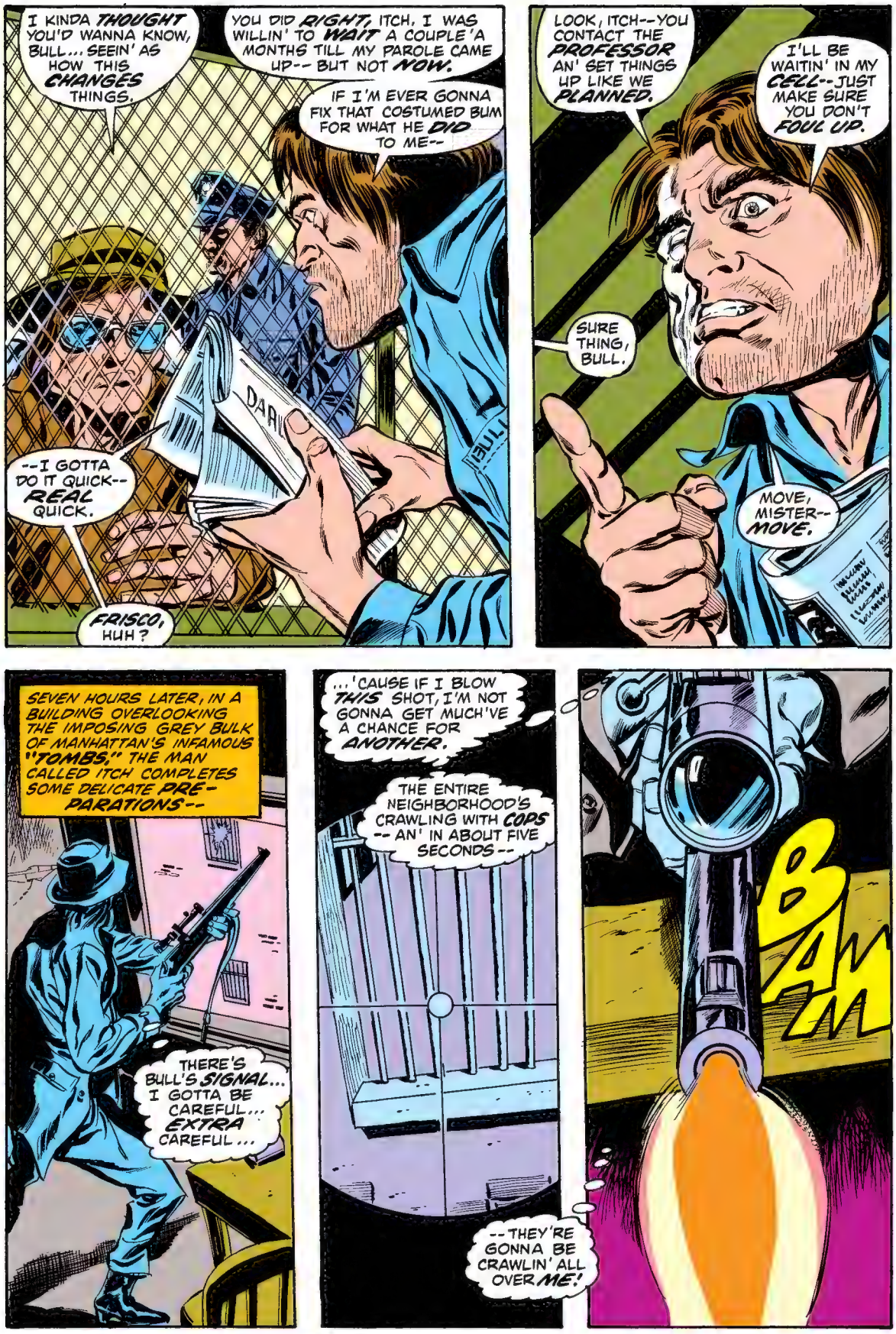
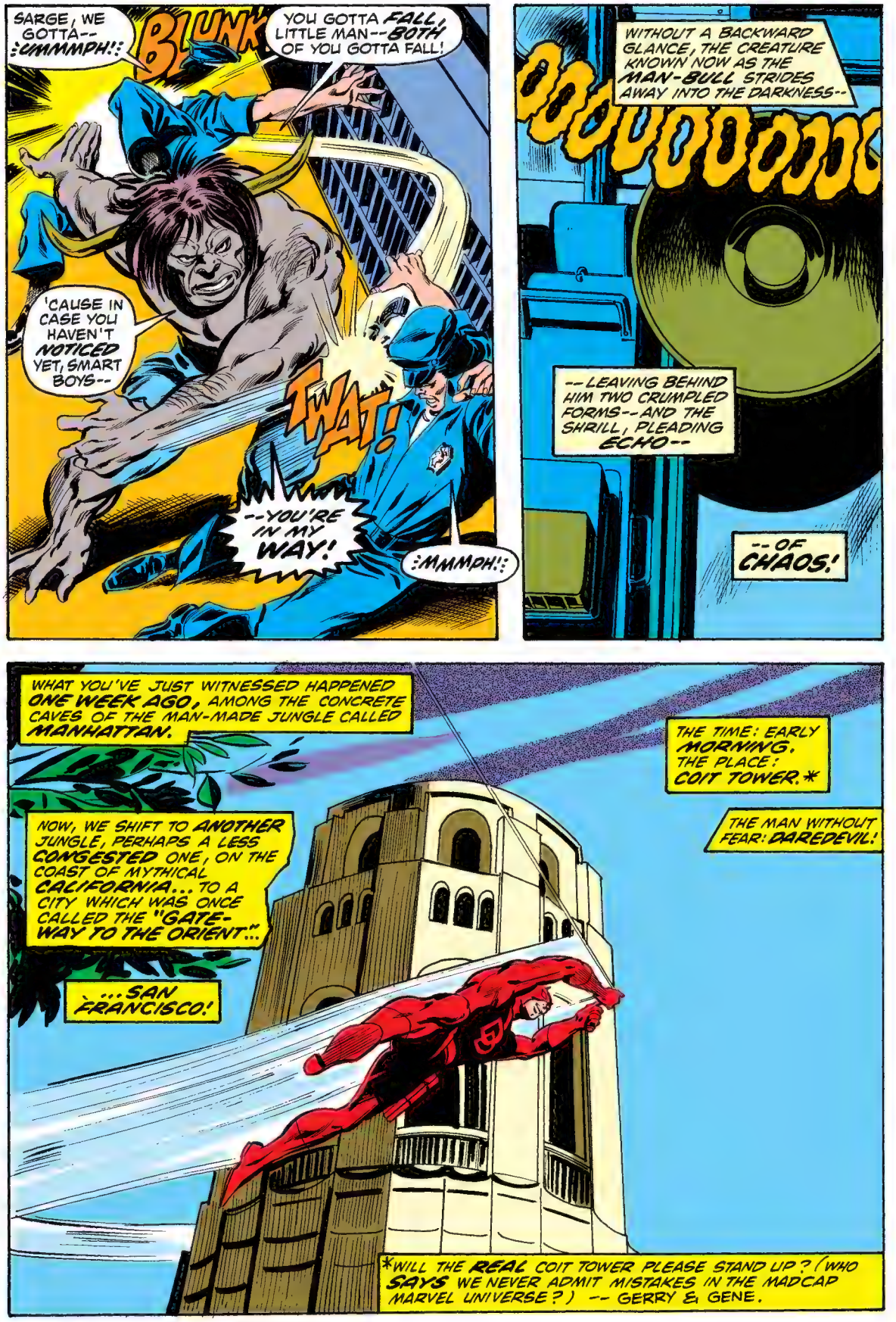
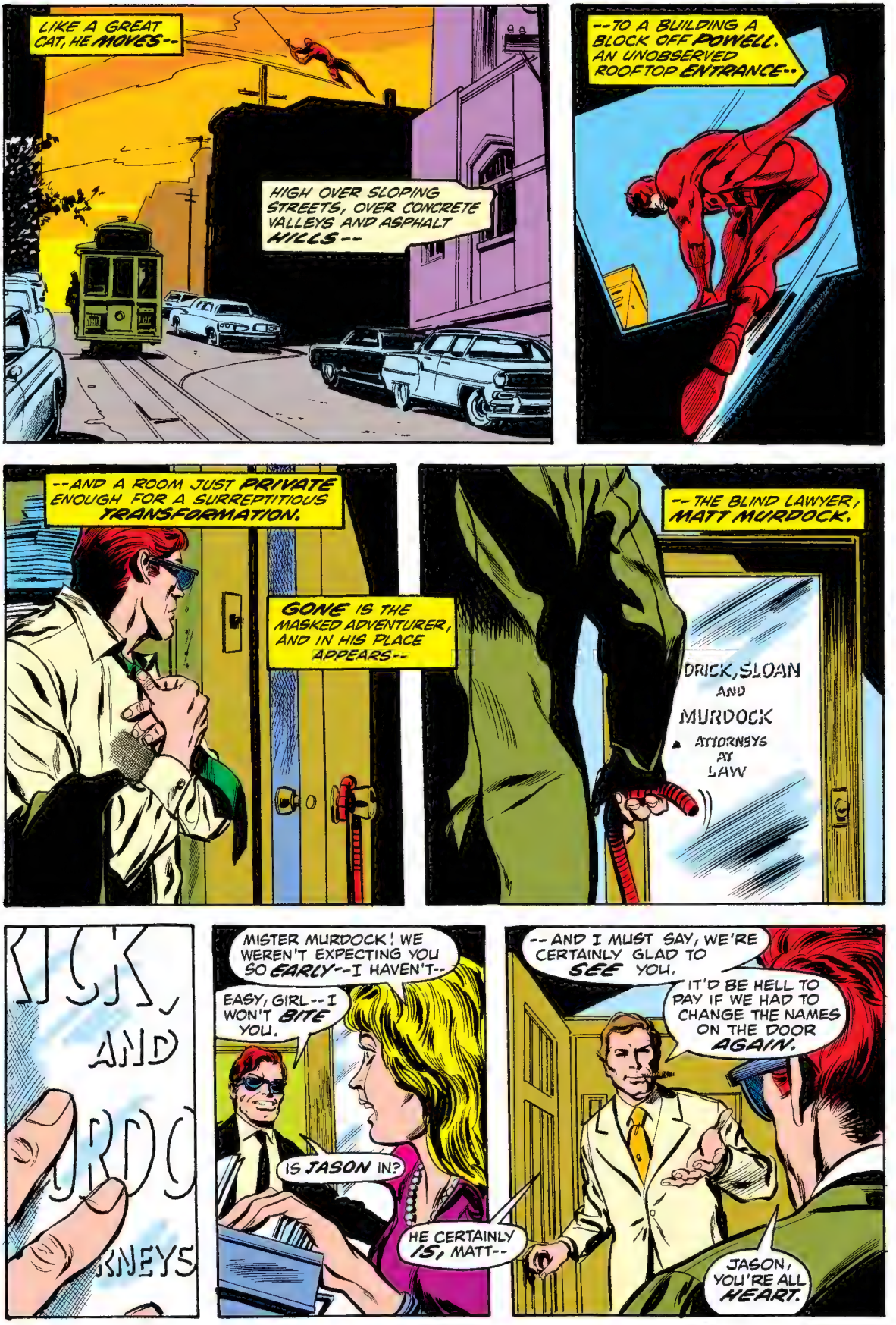
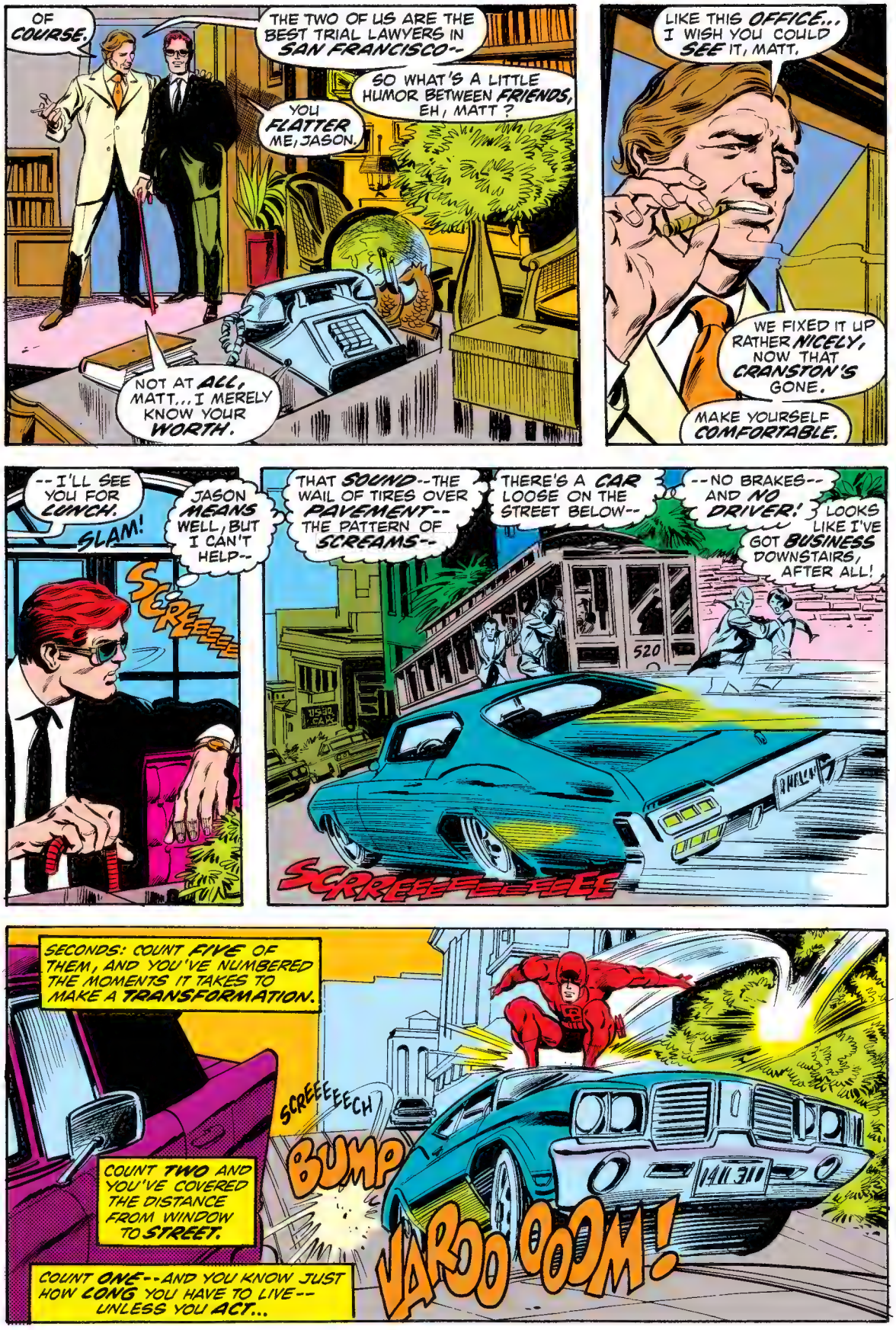
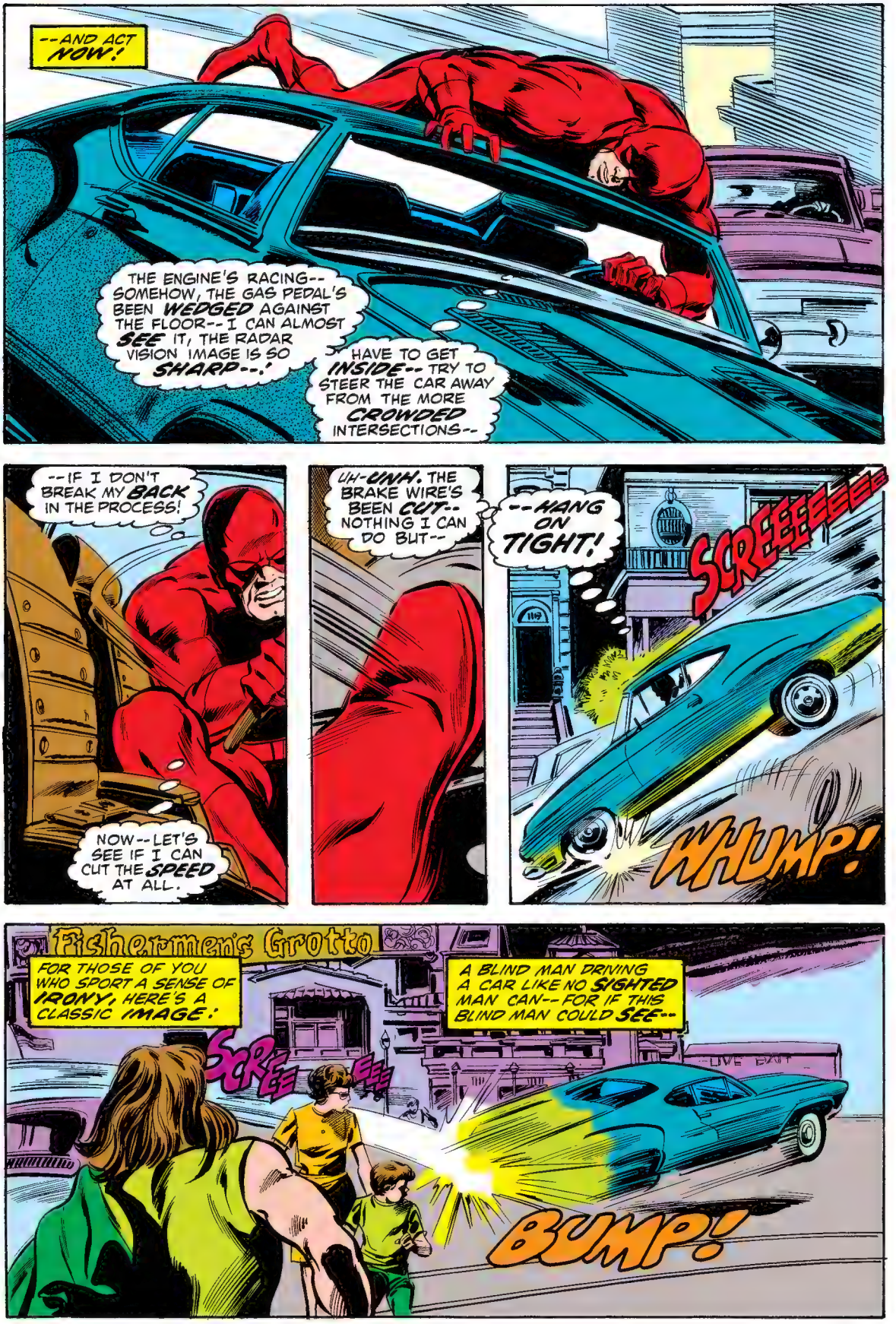

I KINDA THOUGHT YOU'D WANNA KNOW, BULL... SEEIN' AS HOW THIS CHANGES THINGS.
YOU DID RIGHT, ITCH. I WAS WILLIN' TO WAIT A COUPLE 'A MONTHS TILL MY PAROLE CAME UP-- BUT NOT NOW.
IF I'M EVER GONNA FIX THAT COSTUMED BUM FOR WHAT HE DID TO ME--
--I GOTTA DO IT QUICK-- REAL QUICK.
FRISCO, HUH?
LOOK, ITCH--YOU CONTACT THE PROFESSOR AN' SET THINGS UP LIKE WE PLANNED.
I'LL BE WAITIN' IN MY CELL--JUST MAKE SURE YOU DON'T FOUL UP.
SURE THING, BULL.
MOVE, MISTER-- MOVE.
SEVEN HOURS LATER, IN A BUILDING OVERLOOKING THE IMPOSING GREY BULK OF MANHATTAN'S INFAMOUS "TOMBS," THE MAN CALLED ITCH COMPLETES SOME DELICATE PRE-PARATIONS--
THERE'S BULL'S SIGNAL... I GOTTA BE CAREFUL... EXTRA CAREFUL...
...'CAUSE IF I BLOW THIS SHOT, I'M NOT GONNA GET MUCH'VE A CHANCE FOR ANOTHER.
THE ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD'S CRAWLING WITH COPS -- AN' IN ABOUT FIVE SECONDS--
--THEY'RE GONNA BE CRAWLIN' ALL OVER ME!
BAM

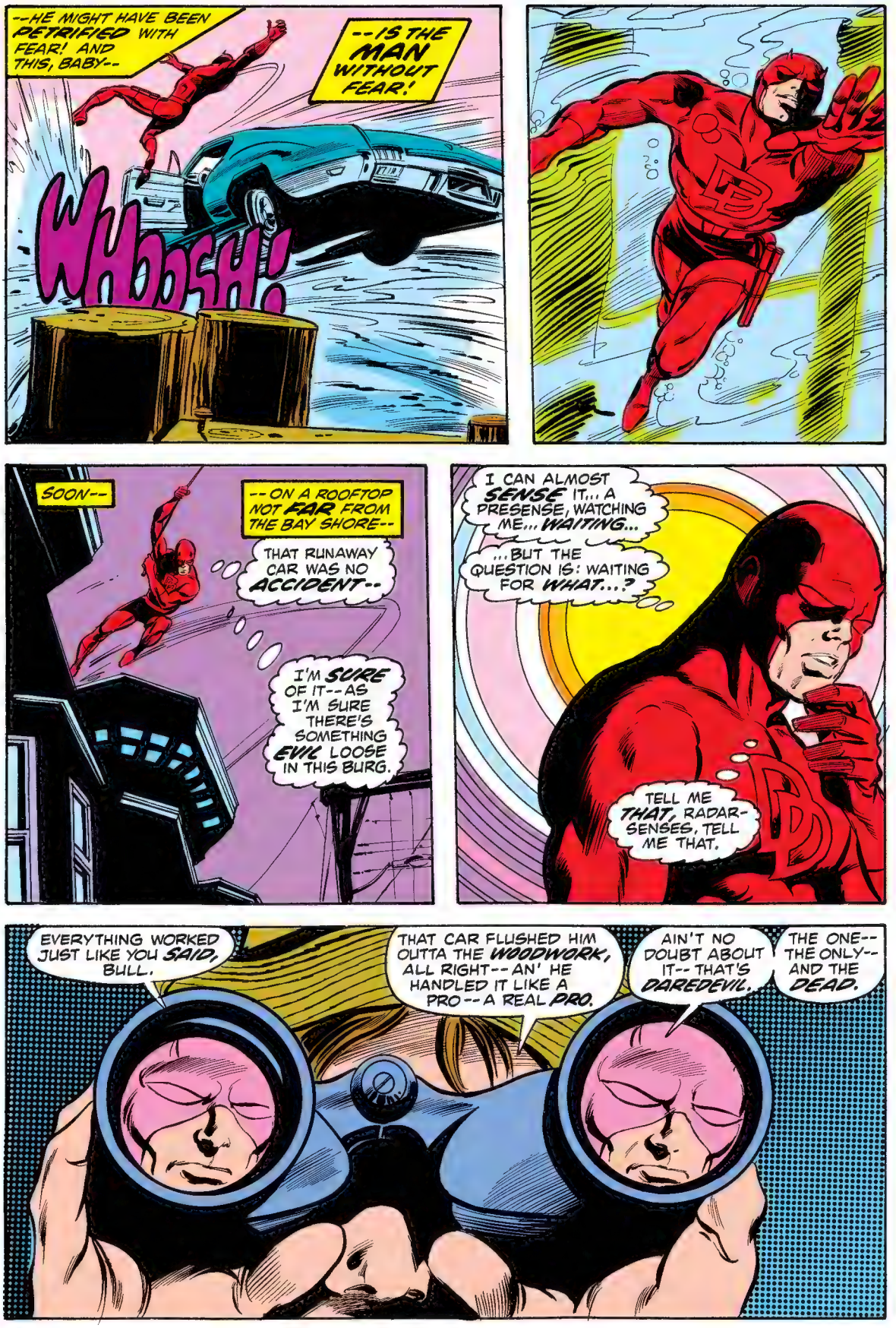
A SHARP RETORT--THE WHISTLE OF A STREAKING PROJECTILE--THE SCREECHING EXPLOSION OF SHATTERING GLASS!
SPINNGG!
BRAKK!
--AS SUDDENLY AS THE MOMENT BEGAN, IT ENDS--
--AND IN ITS TURBULANT WAKE--THE INSTANT OF REBIRTH!
WE'LL TAKE IT NICE AND EASY, CUNNINGHAM.
THAT CELL BELONGS TO BULL TAURUS--AND BELIEVE ME, ROOKIE--BULL'S THE SORT OF MAN WHO PLAYS FOR KEEPS!
SOUNDED LIKE A SHOT, SERGEANT, HOW DO YOU WANT TO HANDLE IT?
YOU SAID IT, COPPER!
I'M THROUGH WITH THIS NICE GUY ROUTE--I'VE SPENT ENOUGH TIME IN THIS JOINT, COOLIN' MY HEELS, WAITIN'--WAITIN' TO BE FREE!
SCR
SNAP!
EEEr
I'VE GOT THINGS TO DO--AN' THANKS TO THE PROFESSOR'S NUTTY INJECTION--
ECH!
--THE MAN-BULL STALKS ONCE MORE!*
*NOW DO YOU REMEMBER BULL TAURUS FROM ISSUE #78 & 79? --ROY.

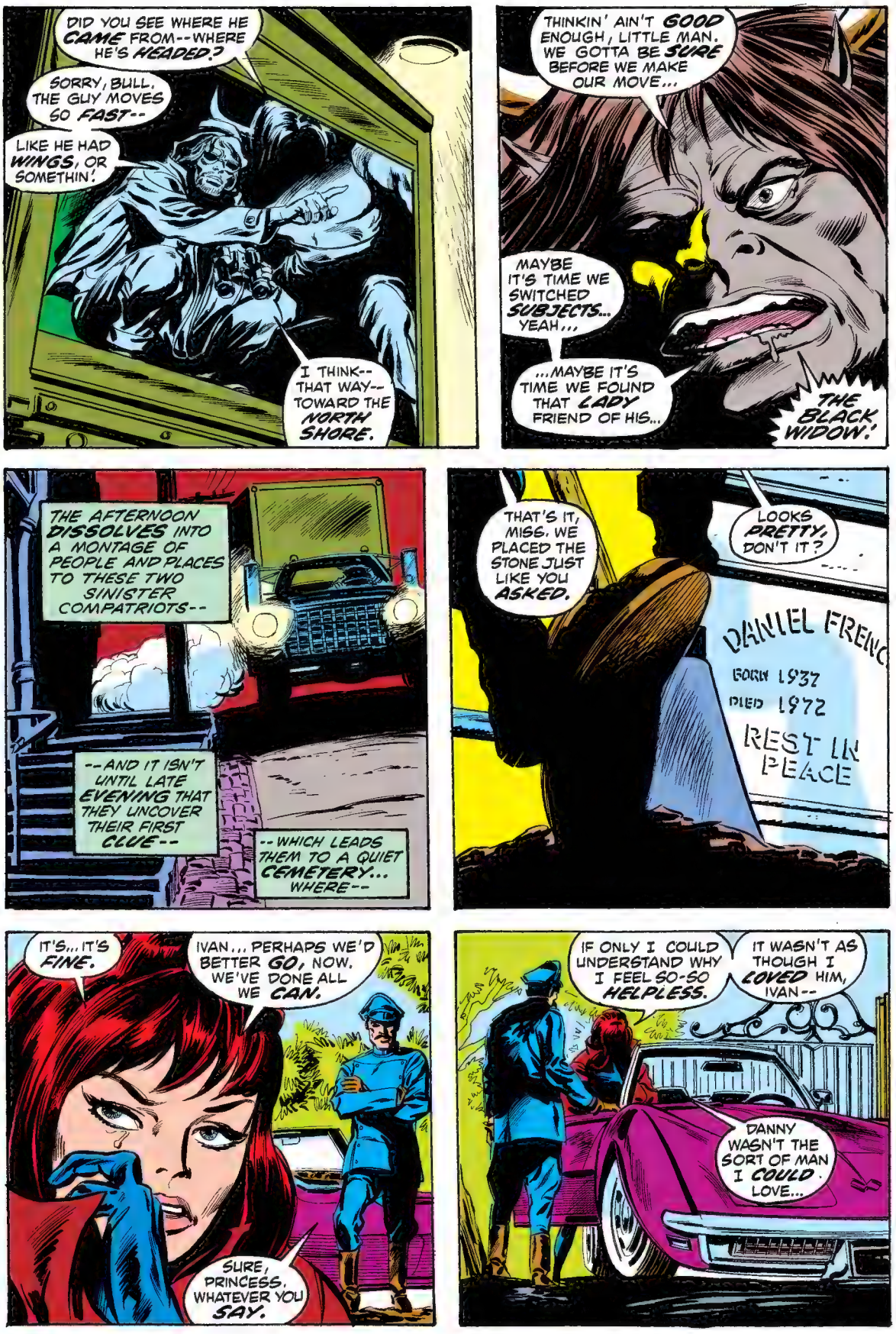

SARGE, WE GOTTA--
:UMMMPH!:
BLUNK
YOU GOTTA FALL, LITTLE MAN--BOTH OF YOU GOTTA FALL!
'CAUSE IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED YET, SMART BOYS--
TWAT!
--YOU'RE IN MY WAY!
:MMMPH!:
WITHOUT A BACKWARD GLANCE, THE CREATURE KNOWN NOW AS THE MAN-BULL STRIDES AWAY INTO THE DARKNESS--
OOOOOOOOO
--LEAVING BEHIND HIM TWO CRUMPLED FORMS--AND THE SHRILL, PLEADING ECHO--
--OF CHAOS!
WHAT YOU'VE JUST WITNESSED HAPPENED ONE WEEK AGO, AMONG THE CONCRETE CAVES OF THE MAN-MADE JUNGLE CALLED MANHATTAN.
THE TIME: EARLY MORNING. THE PLACE: COIT TOWER.*
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR: DAREDEVIL!
NOW, WE SHIFT TO ANOTHER JUNGLE, PERHAPS A LESS CONGESTED ONE, ON THE COAST OF MYTHICAL CALIFORNIA... TO A CITY WHICH WAS ONCE CALLED THE "GATE-WAY TO THE ORIENT"...
...SAN FRANCISCO!
*WILL THE REAL COIT TOWER PLEASE STAND UP? (WHO SAYS WE NEVER ADMIT MISTAKES IN THE MADCAP MARVEL UNIVERSE?) -- GERRY & GENE.


LIKE A GREAT CAT, HE MOVES--
HIGH OVER SLOPING STREETS, OVER CONCRETE VALLEYS AND ASPHALT HILLS--
--TO A BUILDING A BLOCK OFF POWELL. AN UNOBSERVED ROOFTOP ENTRANCE--
--AND A ROOM JUST PRIVATE ENOUGH FOR A SURREPTITIOUS TRANSFORMATION.
GONE IS THE MASKED ADVENTURER, AND IN HIS PLACE APPEARS--
--THE BLIND LAWYER, MATT MURDOCK.
DRICK, SLOAN AND MURDOCK
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
AND
MURDO
KNEYS
MISTER MURDOCK! WE WEREN'T EXPECTING YOU SO EARLY--I HAVEN'T--
EASY, GIRL--I WON'T BITE YOU.
IS JASON IN?
HE CERTAINLY IS, MATT--
--AND I MUST SAY, WE'RE CERTAINLY GLAD TO SEE YOU.
IT'D BE HELL TO PAY IF WE HAD TO CHANGE THE NAMES ON THE DOOR AGAIN.
JASON, YOU'RE ALL HEART.

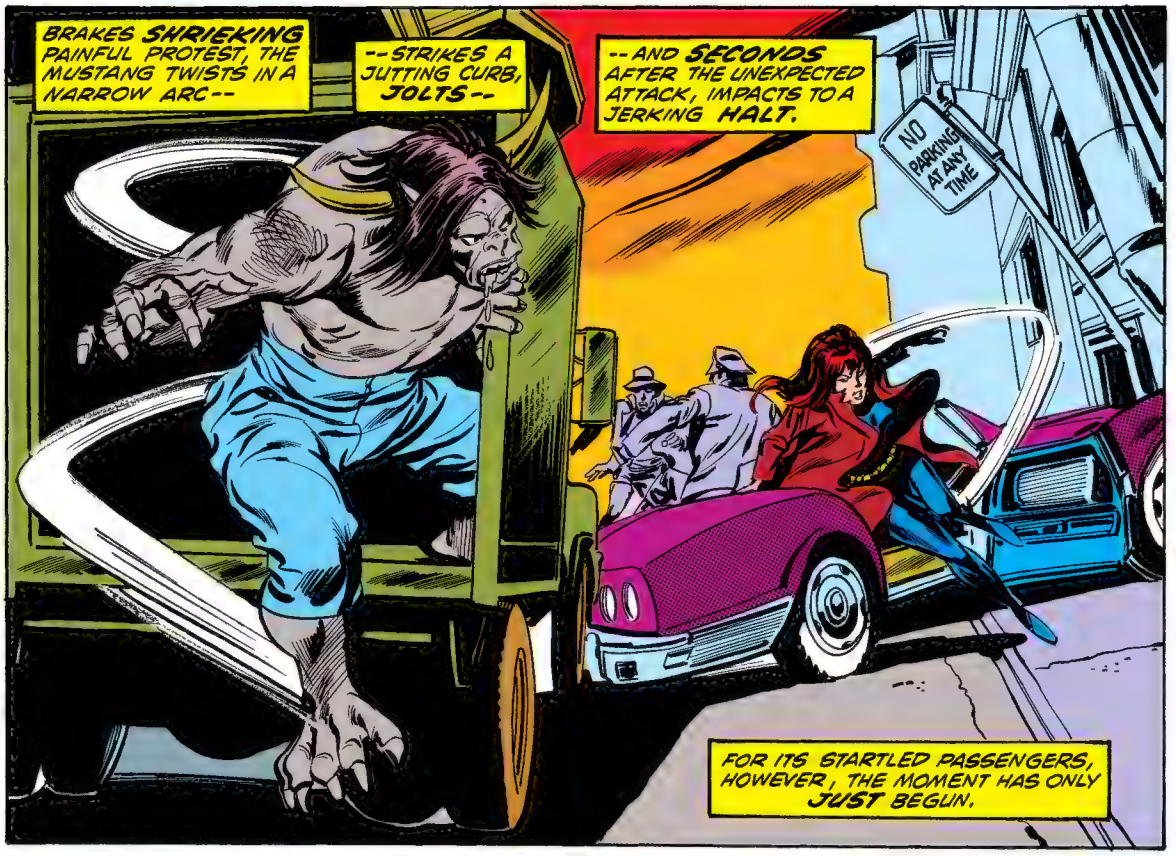

OF COURSE.
THE TWO OF US ARE THE BEST TRIAL LAWYERS IN SAN FRANCISCO--
SO WHAT'S A LITTLE HUMOR BETWEEN FRIENDS, EH, MATT?
YOU FLATTER ME, JASON.
NOT AT ALL, MATT... I MERELY KNOW YOUR WORTH.
LIKE THIS OFFICE... I WISH YOU COULD SEE IT, MATT.
WE FIXED IT UP RATHER NICELY, NOW THAT CRANSTON'S GONE.
MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE.
--I'LL SEE YOU FOR LUNCH.
SLAM!
JASON MEANS WELL, BUT I CAN'T HELP--
SCREEEEEE
THAT SOUND--THE WAIL OF TIRES OVER PAVEMENT-- THE PATTERN OF SCREAMS--
THERE'S A CAR LOOSE ON THE STREET BELOW--
--NO BRAKES-- AND NO DRIVER!
LOOKS LIKE I'VE GOT BUSINESS DOWNSTAIRS, AFTER ALL!
520
SCRREEEEEEEEEEE
SECONDS: COUNT FIVE OF THEM, AND YOU'VE NUMBERED THE MOMENTS IT TAKES TO MAKE A TRANSFORMATION.
COUNT TWO AND YOU'VE COVERED THE DISTANCE FROM WINDOW TO STREET.
COUNT ONE--AND YOU KNOW JUST HOW LONG YOU HAVE TO LIVE-- UNLESS YOU ACT...
SCREEEEECH
BUMP
VAROOOOOM!


--AND ACT NOW!
THE ENGINE'S RACING-- SOMEHOW, THE GAS PEDAL'S BEEN WEDGED AGAINST THE FLOOR-- I CAN ALMOST SEE IT, THE RADAR VISION IMAGE IS SO SHARP--!
HAVE TO GET INSIDE-- TRY TO STEER THE CAR AWAY FROM THE MORE CROWDED INTERSECTIONS--
--IF I DON'T BREAK MY BACK IN THE PROCESS!
NOW--LET'S SEE IF I CAN CUT THE SPEED AT ALL.
UH-UNH. THE BRAKE WIRE'S BEEN CUT-- NOTHING I CAN DO BUT--
--HANG ON TIGHT!
SCREEEEEEE
WHUMP!
Fishermen's Grotto
FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO SPORT A SENSE OF IRONY, HERE'S A CLASSIC IMAGE:
A BLIND MAN DRIVING A CAR LIKE NO SIGHTED MAN CAN-- FOR IF THIS BLIND MAN COULD SEE--
SCREE EE EE
BUMP!


--HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN PETRIFIED WITH FEAR! AND THIS, BABY--
--IS THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
WHOOSH!
SOON--
--ON A ROOFTOP NOT FAR FROM THE BAY SHORE--
THAT RUNAWAY CAR WAS NO ACCIDENT--
I'M SURE OF IT--AS I'M SURE THERE'S SOMETHING EVIL LOOSE IN THIS BURG.
I CAN ALMOST SENSE IT... A PRESENSE, WATCHING ME... WAITING...
...BUT THE QUESTION IS: WAITING FOR WHAT...?
TELL ME THAT, RADAR-SENSES, TELL ME THAT.
EVERYTHING WORKED JUST LIKE YOU SAID, BULL.
THAT CAR FLUSHED HIM OUTTA THE WOODWORK, ALL RIGHT--AN' HE HANDLED IT LIKE A PRO--A REAL PRO.
AIN'T NO DOUBT ABOUT IT--THAT'S DAREDEVIL.
THE ONE--THE ONLY--AND THE DEAD.


DID YOU SEE WHERE HE CAME FROM--WHERE HE'S HEADED?
SORRY, BULL. THE GUY MOVES SO FAST--
LIKE HE HAD WINGS, OR SOMETHIN!
I THINK--THAT WAY--TOWARD THE NORTH SHORE.
THINKIN' AIN'T GOOD ENOUGH, LITTLE MAN. WE GOTTA BE SURE BEFORE WE MAKE OUR MOVE...
MAYBE IT'S TIME WE SWITCHED SUBJECTS... YEAH...
...MAYBE IT'S TIME WE FOUND THAT LADY FRIEND OF HIS...
THE BLACK WIDOW!
THE AFTERNOON DISSOLVES INTO A MONTAGE OF PEOPLE AND PLACES TO THESE TWO SINISTER COMPATRIOTS--
--AND IT ISN'T UNTIL LATE EVENING THAT THEY UNCOVER THEIR FIRST CLUE--
--WHICH LEADS THEM TO A QUIET CEMETERY... WHERE--
THAT'S IT, MISS. WE PLACED THE STONE JUST LIKE YOU ASKED.
LOOKS PRETTY, DON'T IT?
DANIEL FRENC
BORN 1937
DIED 1972
REST IN PEACE
IT'S... IT'S FINE.
IVAN... PERHAPS WE'D BETTER GO, NOW. WE'VE DONE ALL WE CAN.
SURE, PRINCESS. WHATEVER YOU SAY.
IF ONLY I COULD UNDERSTAND WHY I FEEL SO-SO HELPLESS.
IT WASN'T AS THOUGH I LOVED HIM, IVAN--
DANNY WASN'T THE SORT OF MAN I COULD LOVE...

...WAS HE?
THE WIDOW'S THOUGHTS SWIRL INTO CONFUSION. BROODING, SHE DOESN'T NOTICE THE VEHICLE APPROACHING CLOSE BESIDE THEM...
THE TRUCK IS NOTICED BY HER BURLY CHAUFFEUR-- NOTICED AND IGNORED--
--FOR IT IS, AFTER ALL, ONLY A TRUCK.
A TRUCK-- AND NOTHING MORE.
IT'S THEM, BULL--WE FOUND 'EM.
GOOD. PACE 'EM A BIT, ITCH--
--AN' WHEN I TELL YA, I WANTCHA TO CROWD 'EM--
--CROWD 'EM HARD--
SCREEEE...
WHUMP!
NOW!

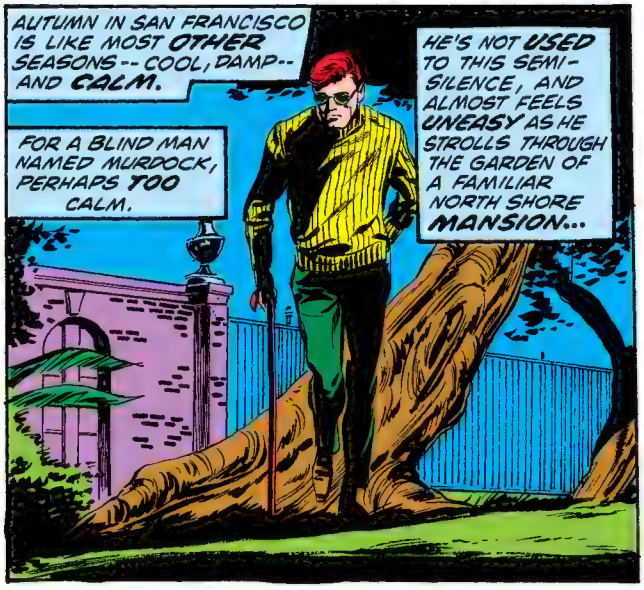

BRAKES SHRIEKING PAINFUL PROTEST, THE MUSTANG TWISTS IN A NARROW ARC--
--STRIKES A JUTTING CURB, JOLTS--
--AND SECONDS AFTER THE UNEXPECTED ATTACK, IMPACTS TO A JERKING HALT.
NO PARKING AT ANY TIME
FOR ITS STARTLED PASSENGERS, HOWEVER, THE MOMENT HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN.

NICE, WIDOW-LADY... REAL NICE! YOU MOVE QUICK-- FASTER THAN YOUR RED-SUITED PAL!
PITY IT DON'T MEAN NUTHIN' THOUGH--
SWOOOSH
--'CAUSE WHEN THE MAN-BULL SETS HIS EYE ON SUMTHIN'-- HE GETS IT--
LITTLE LADY, DOES HE EVER!

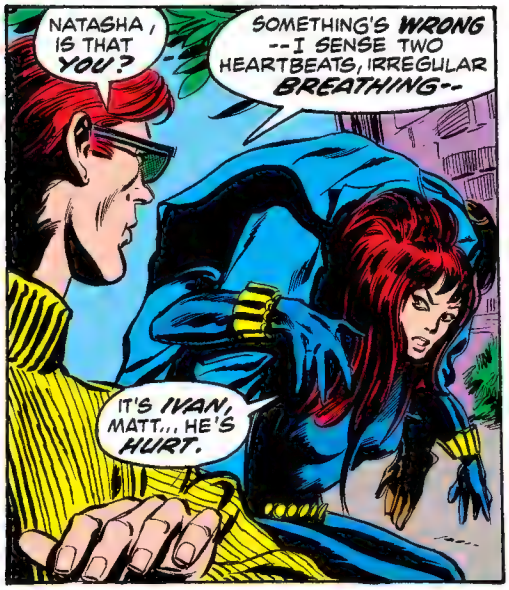
KEEP YOUR FILTHY PAWS OFF HER, PUNK--
--UNLESS YOU WANT TO END UP LIKE YOUR EAGER BEAVER FRIEND HERE--
CRUNCH!
--DOWN-- AND OUT!

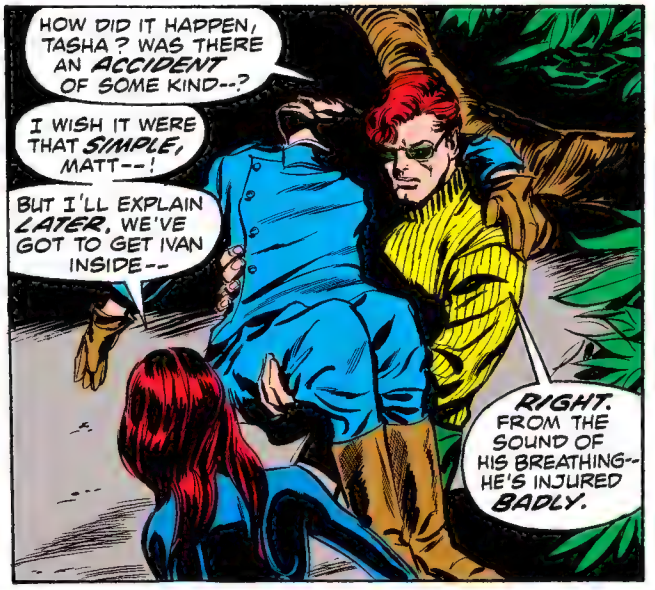
TALK, MISTER-- JUST PURE TALK!
WHEN YOU COME UP AGAINST ME, YOU GOTTA DO BETTER THAN YAK--
SNAK!
--YOU GOTTA PRODUCE!
AND, OLD MAN-- YOU JUST DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES!
IF YOU'VE INJURED HIM-- I SWEAR, I'LL DESTROY YOU!
LADY, YOU JUST DON'T UNDER-STAND.
THE WORLD HAS ROOM FOR ONLY TWO KINDSA PEOPLE-- THE ONES WHO LIVE--
--AN' THE ONES WHO DIE!
YOU GOTTA BE STRONG TO MAKE IT, HONEY--
--YOU'LL BE STEPPED ON IF YOU AIN'T STRONG-- HUH?

THERE ARE WAYS TO SURVIVE WITHOUT BRUTE FORCE, MY FRIEND--
--SUCH AS WIT-- AND SKILL!
CRAZY DAME! YOU THINK THAT MATTERS?
YOU GOTTA HAVE THE POWER, Y'HEAR? THAT'S WHAT COUNTS-- THE STRENGTH--
--THE MUSCLE TO GET WHAT YOU WANT! THE REST IS JUST TIME--
--'CAUSE IN THE END-- IT'S THE BOYS WITH THE MUSCLE WHO'RE GONNA WINNNNH!
WHOMP!
YOUR APPROACH TO LIFE IS FASCINATING, MY FRIEND--
WE SIMPLY MUST TALK AGAIN, BUT FOR NOW--
--I'VE OTHER, FAR MORE PRESSING CONCERNS TO ATTEND TO--
--AND I'M SURE YOU'LL FORGIVE ME IF I LEAVE-- SOMEWHAT HASTILY.


AUTUMN IN SAN FRANCISCO IS LIKE MOST OTHER SEASONS -- COOL, DAMP -- AND CALM.
FOR A BLIND MAN NAMED MURDOCK, PERHAPS TOO CALM.
HE'S NOT USED TO THIS SEMI-SILENCE, AND ALMOST FEELS UNEASY AS HE STROLLS THROUGH THE GARDEN OF A FAMILIAR NORTH SHORE MANSION...

...UNTIL...


NATASHA, IS THAT YOU?
SOMETHING'S WRONG --I SENSE TWO HEARTBEATS, IRREGULAR BREATHING--
IT'S IVAN, MATT... HE'S HURT.

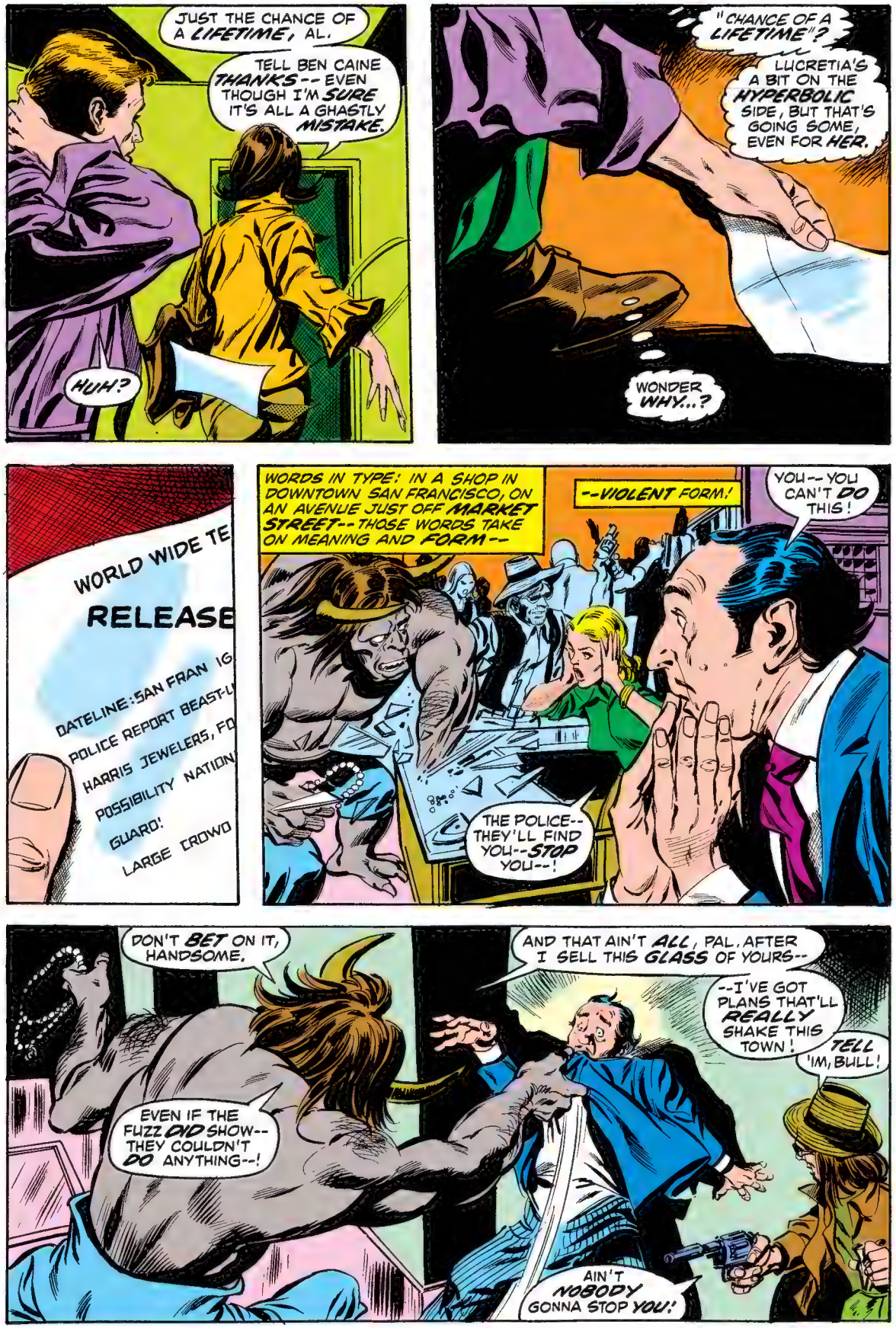

HOW DID IT HAPPEN, TASHA? WAS THERE AN ACCIDENT OF SOME KIND--?
I WISH IT WERE THAT SIMPLE, MATT--!
BUT I'LL EXPLAIN LATER. WE'VE GOT TO GET IVAN INSIDE--
RIGHT. FROM THE SOUND OF HIS BREATHING-- HE'S INJURED BADLY.

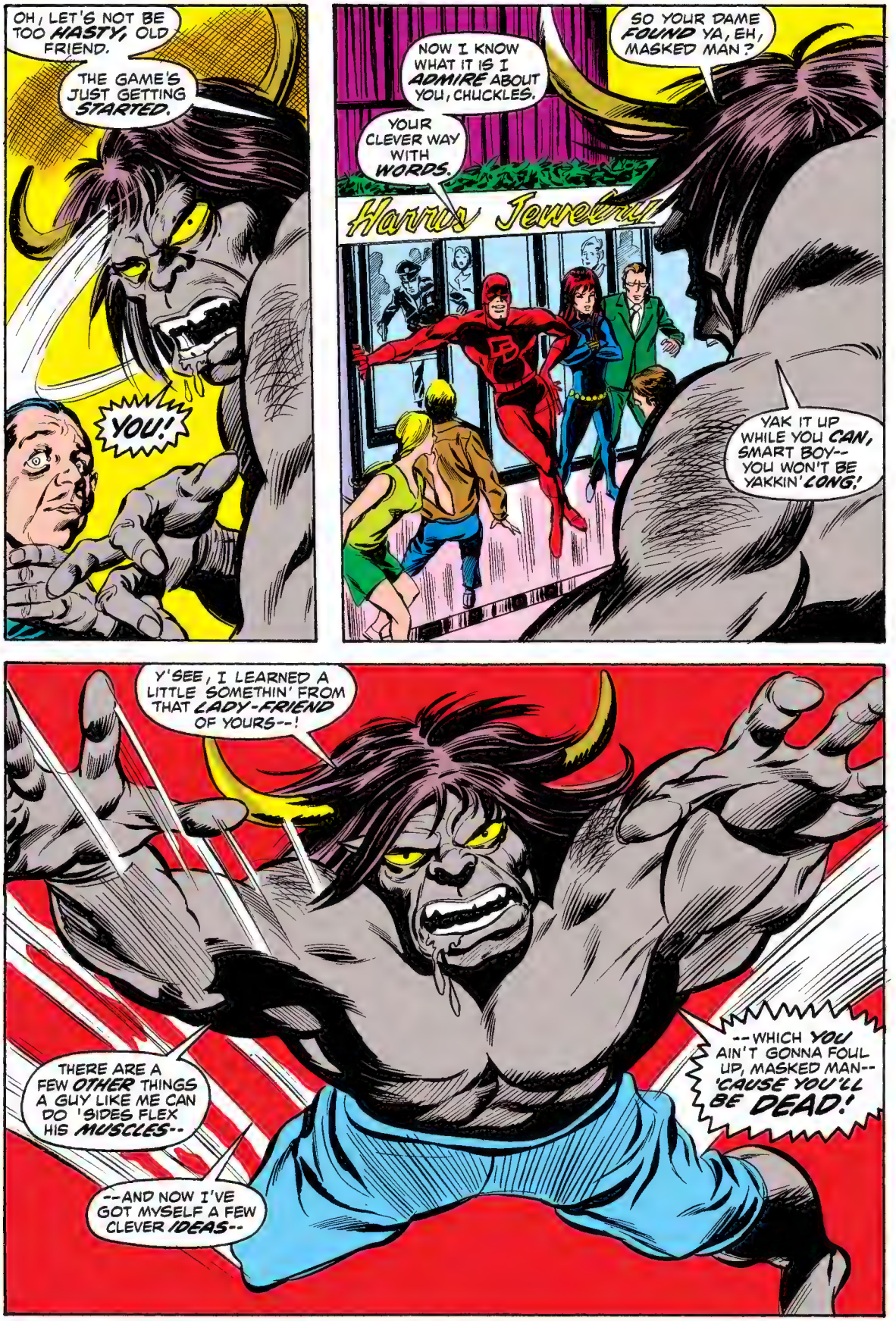
...AND THEN I CAME DIRECTLY HERE.
MATT, I'M WORRIED-- DO YOU THINK HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT?

IVAN'S NOT EXACTLY FRAGILE, TASHA, THE OLD BOY'S GOT THE CONSTITUTION OF AN OX.
AND SPEAKING OF DUMB ANIMALS -- WE'VE GOT OURSELVES AN UNANNOUNCED APPOINTMENT WITH A CERTAIN HOOVED HORROR CALLED--
THE MAN-BULL!

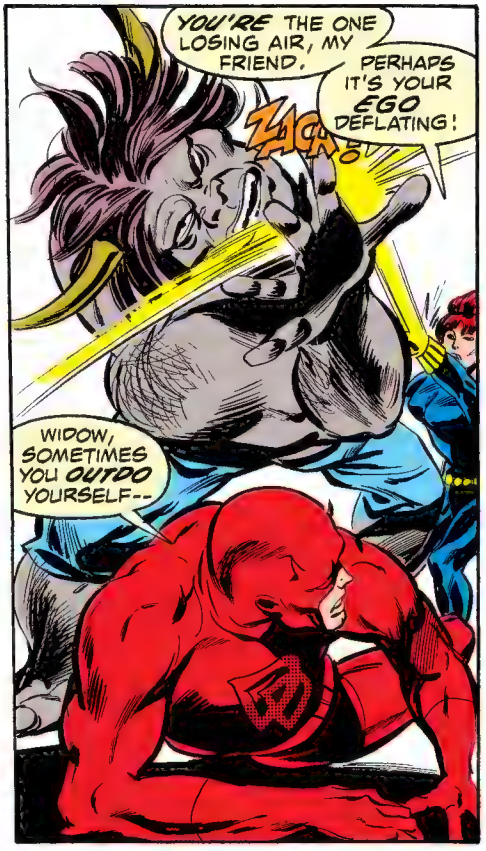
LET'S FACE IT-- WITH A PICTURE LIKE THIS, WHO CAN THINK OF A THING TO SAY? ENJOY, PILGRIM. -- GER.

THIS MAN-BULL CHARACTER-- I'VE HEARD YOU MENTION HIM, MATT--
--BUT YOU'VE NEVER TOLD ME WHO-- OR WHAT-- HE REALLY IS!
BEFORE A FEW MONTHS AGO, TASHA-- HE WAS NOBODY--
--JUST A BRUTAL HENCHMAN WITH FISTS FOR SALE-- OR RENT.
THEN HE MET UP WITH MISTER KLINE-- AND FOUND HIMSELF A PAWN IN A DEADLY GAME OF CHESS.*
* A GAME BEGUN IN ISSUE # 78. --ROY.
HE TRIED TO KIDNAP SOME KIDS TO PLAY INVOLUNTARY GUINEA PIGS-- AND WOULD HAVE, IF I HADN'T STEPPED IN.
AFTER THAT, KLINE MADE HIM THE GUINEA PIG-- AND IT TURNED HIM INTO A HALFBREED BULL--
--A MAN-BULL WHICH BLAMED ME FOR THE TRANSFORMATION!
SOMEHOW, HE MUST HAVE REDISCOVERED THE FORMULA WHICH CHANGED HIM--
--AND FOR SOME CRAZY REASON--
-- HE STILL WANTS BLOOD-- MY BLOOD!
HEY, LUCRETIA-- MISTER CAINE WANTS YOU TO HANDLE THIS STORY.
THERE'S A CREW WAITING DOWN AT MOBILE 2.
ANOTHER SOFT ASSIGNMENT FOR THE DELICATE MISS JONES?
HOW KIND OF MISTER CAINE,
AW, C'MON, LUCRETIA.
SORRY, AL. I'M JUST TIRED OF BEING HANDED ALL THE HUMAN-INTEREST STORIES.
DON'T THEY THINK A WOMAN CAN--
OH!
WHAT'S UP, LU?


JUST THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME, AL.
TELL BEN CAINE THANKS -- EVEN THOUGH I'M SURE IT'S ALL A GHASTLY MISTAKE.
HUH?
"CHANCE OF A LIFETIME"?
LUCRETIA'S A BIT ON THE HYPERBOLIC SIDE, BUT THAT'S GOING SOME, EVEN FOR HER.
WONDER WHY...?
WORLD WIDE TE
RELEASE
DATELINE: SAN FRAN IG
POLICE REPORT BEAST-L
HARRIS JEWELERS, FO
POSSIBILITY NATION
GUARD!
LARGE CROWD
WORDS IN TYPE! IN A SHOP IN DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO, ON AN AVENUE JUST OFF MARKET STREET -- THOSE WORDS TAKE ON MEANING AND FORM --
--VIOLENT FORM!
YOU -- YOU CAN'T DO THIS!
THE POLICE -- THEY'LL FIND YOU -- STOP YOU --!
DON'T BET ON IT, HANDSOME.
EVEN IF THE FUZZ DID SHOW -- THEY COULDN'T DO ANYTHING --!
AND THAT AIN'T ALL, PAL, AFTER I SELL THIS GLASS OF YOURS --
--I'VE GOT PLANS THAT'LL REALLY SHAKE THIS TOWN!
TELL 'IM, BULL!
AIN'T NOBODY GONNA STOP YOU!

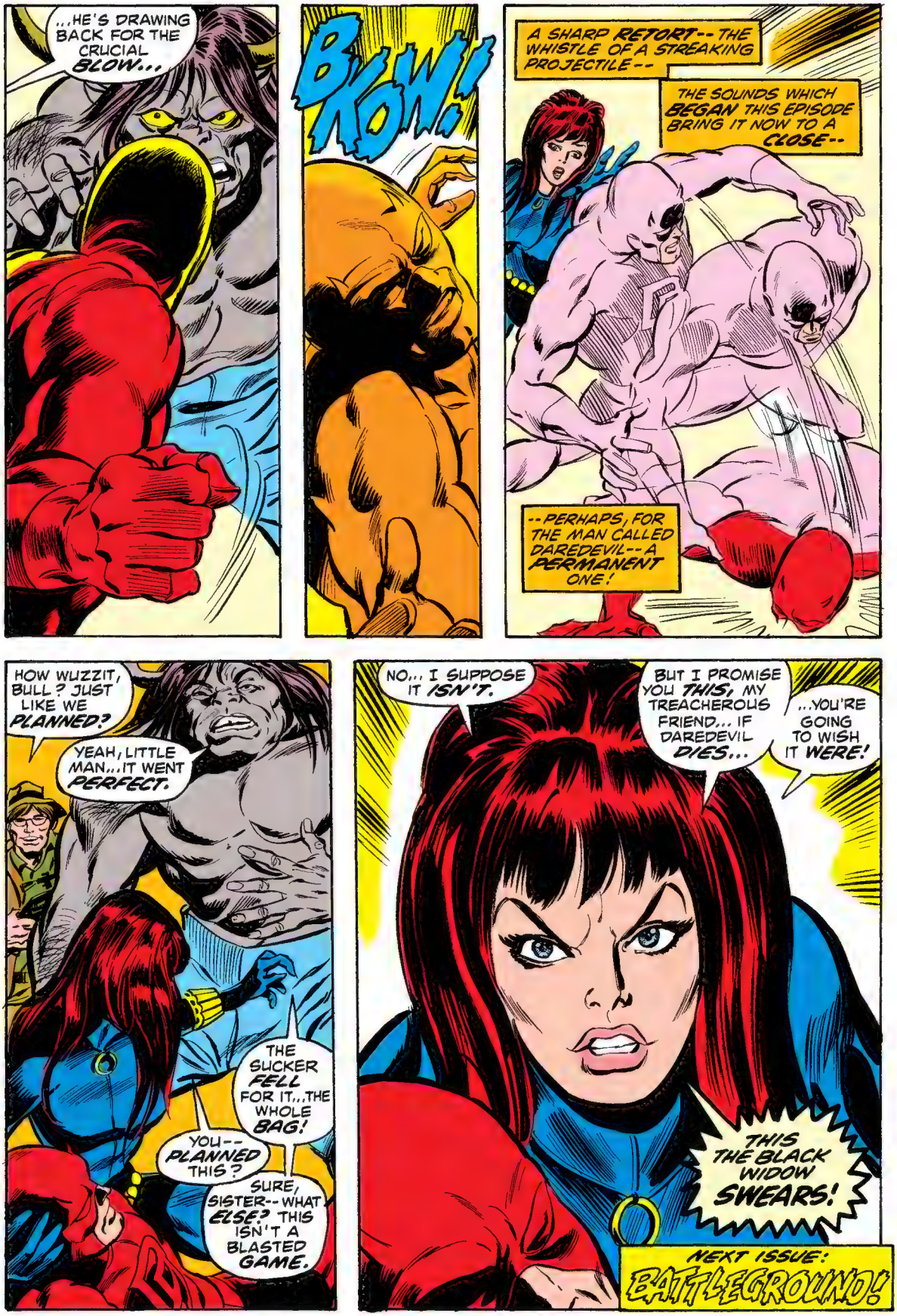

OH, LET'S NOT BE TOO HASTY, OLD FRIEND.
THE GAME'S JUST GETTING STARTED.
YOU!
NOW I KNOW WHAT IT IS I ADMIRE ABOUT YOU, CHUCKLES.
YOUR CLEVER WAY WITH WORDS.
SO YOUR DAME FOUND YA, EH, MASKED MAN?
Harris Jewelry
YAK IT UP WHILE YOU CAN, SMART BOY-- YOU WON'T BE YAKKIN' LONG!
Y'SEE, I LEARNED A LITTLE SOMETHIN' FROM THAT LADY-FRIEND OF YOURS--!
THERE ARE A FEW OTHER THINGS A GUY LIKE ME CAN DO 'SIDES FLEX HIS MUSCLES--
--AND NOW I'VE GOT MYSELF A FEW CLEVER IDEAS--
--WHICH YOU AIN'T GONNA FOUL UP, MASKED MAN-- 'CAUSE YOU'LL BE DEAD!

KRASH!
WHAT'SA MATTER, TOUGH MAN?
LOSE ALL YOUR HOT AIR?


YOU'RE THE ONE LOSING AIR, MY FRIEND.
PERHAPS IT'S YOUR EGO DEFLATING!
ZAGH!
WIDOW, SOMETIMES YOU OUTDO YOURSELF--

--BUT HOW 'BOUT GIVING A FELLA A CHANCE TO DO HIS OWN FIGHTING?
I'M NOT IN A SICK-BED YET--
RIGHT, BRIGHT EYES?

THIS IS LUCRETIA JONES, KGG-TV, OUTSIDE THE HARRIS JEWEL EXCHANGE IN DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO.
AS I SPEAK, A BATTLE RAGES--A CONFLICT UNLIKE ANY EVER WITNESSED IN THIS CITY--BETWEEN A CREATURE ONLY HALF A MAN--
--AND A MAN--SO MUCH MORE.
IT'S A STRUGGLE OF LIFE AND DEATH--WINNER TAKE ALL.
WAIT... SOMETHING'S HAPPENING, NOW. THE MASKED MAN IS RISING...


...HE'S DRAWING BACK FOR THE CRUCIAL BLOW...
BKOW!!
A SHARP RETORT -- THE WHISTLE OF A STREAKING PROJECTILE --
THE SOUNDS WHICH BEGAN THIS EPISODE BRING IT NOW TO A CLOSE --
-- PERHAPS, FOR THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL -- A PERMANENT ONE!
HOW WUZZIT, BULL? JUST LIKE WE PLANNED?
YEAH, LITTLE MAN... IT WENT PERFECT.
THE SUCKER FELL FOR IT... THE WHOLE BAG!
YOU -- PLANNED THIS?
SURE, SISTER -- WHAT ELSE? THIS ISN'T A BLASTED GAME.
NO... I SUPPOSE IT ISN'T.
BUT I PROMISE YOU THIS, MY TREACHEROUS FRIEND... IF DAREDEVIL DIES...
...YOU'RE GOING TO WISH IT WERE!
THIS THE BLACK WIDOW SWEARS!
NEXT ISSUE: BATTLEGROUND!

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
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DAREDEVIL
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW
LIE DOWN AND DIE, MASKED MAN! YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM--
--AN ENTIRE CITY OF MONSTERS!
LEGION OF THE LOST!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
DAREDEVIL'S DOWN, WIDOW-LADY!
THE ONLY THING THAT STANDS BETWEEN ME AN' THIS TOWN IS YOU--
--AND MISSIE, YOU AIN'T NUTHIN' AT ALL!
GUESS AGAIN, MAN-BULL! YOU MAY HAVE KILLED THE MAN I LOVE--
--AND IF YOU HAVE--
THE WIDOW WILL MAKE YOU PAY!
GERRY CONWAY SCRIPTER
GENE COLAN ARTIST
ERNIE CHUA INKER
JOHN COSTANZA LETTERER
COLORIST
ROY THOMAS EDITOR
IRVING FORBUSH MORAL SUPPORT

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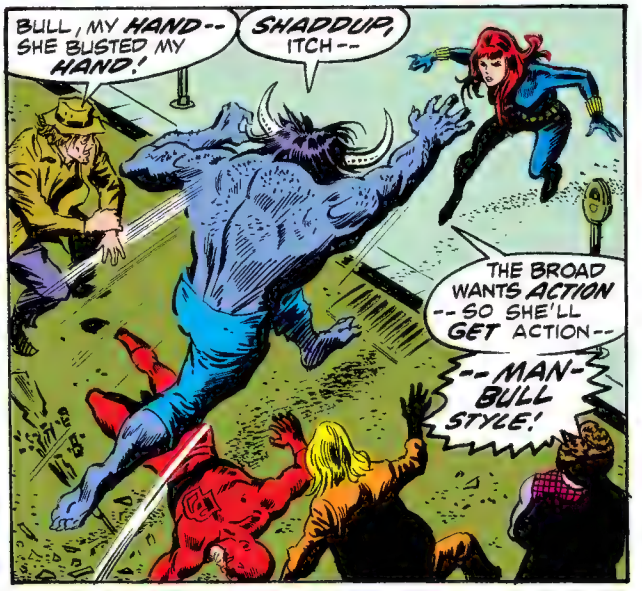
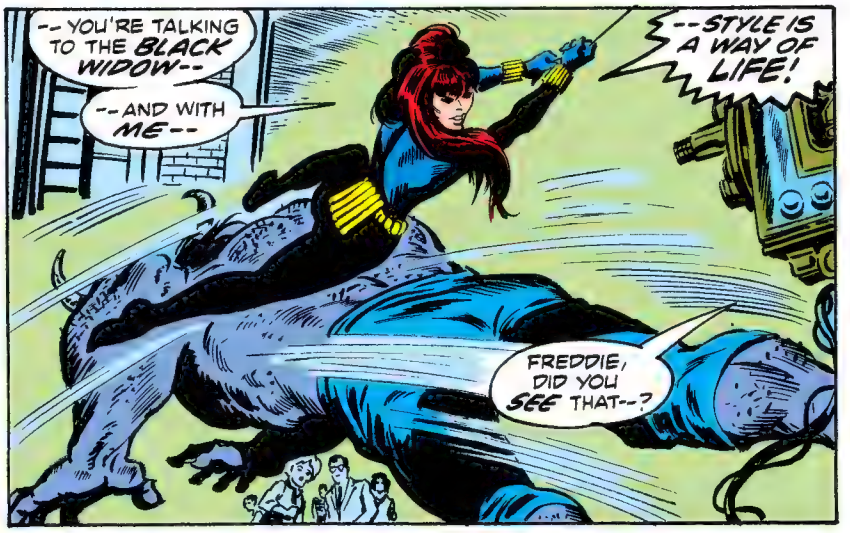
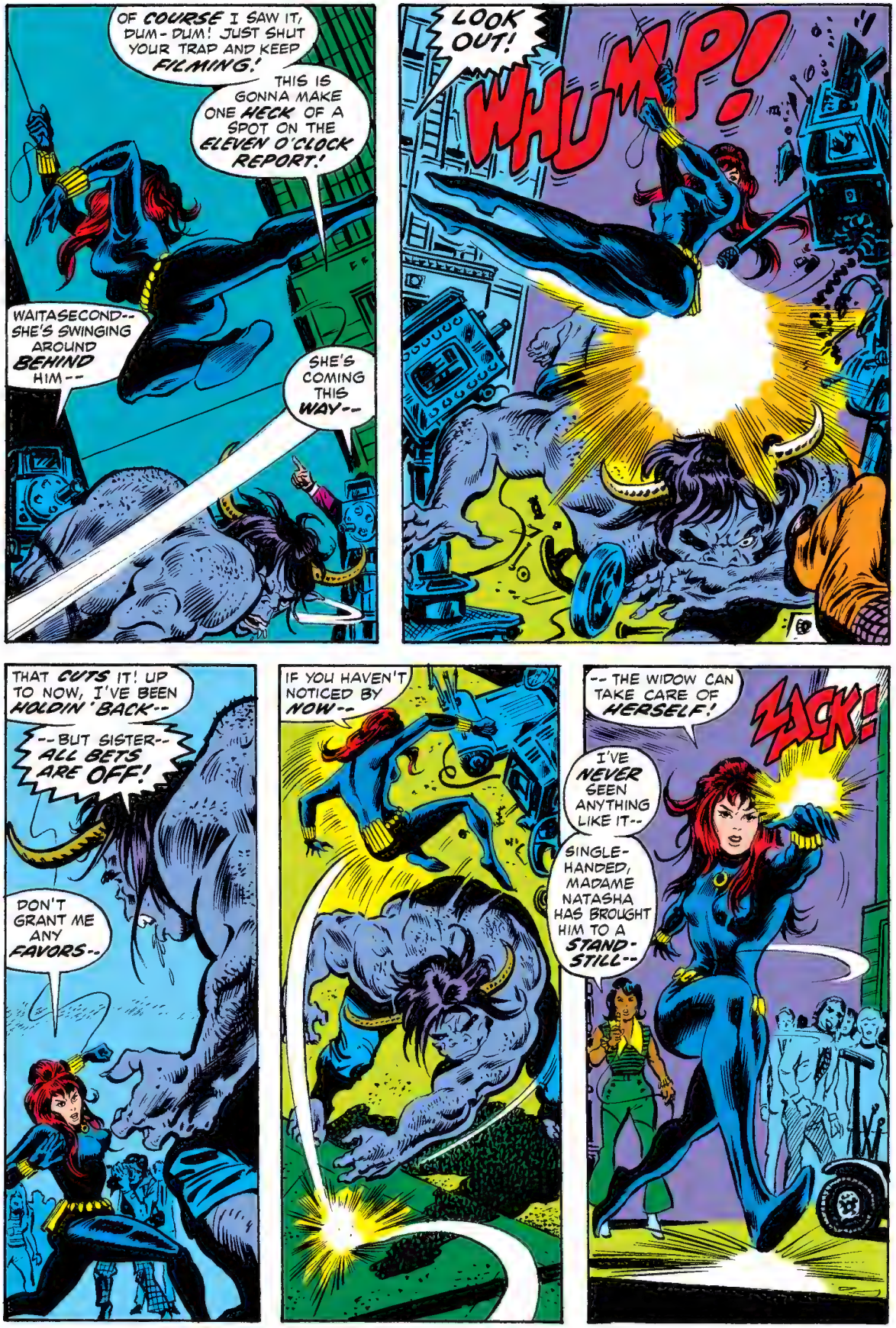
FRIGHTEN ME, GIRL.
HOW'RE YOU GONNA STOP A GUY WHO'S HALF MAN--HALF BULL?
I PROMISE YOU, MY FRIEND-- I'LL FIND A WAY--
--AND PERHAPS I'LL START--

--BY DESTROYING THE GUN YOU USED ON DAREDEVIL--
--AND THEN-- BY DESTROYING YOU!
ZZAK!
EEEOW!
PUNT!

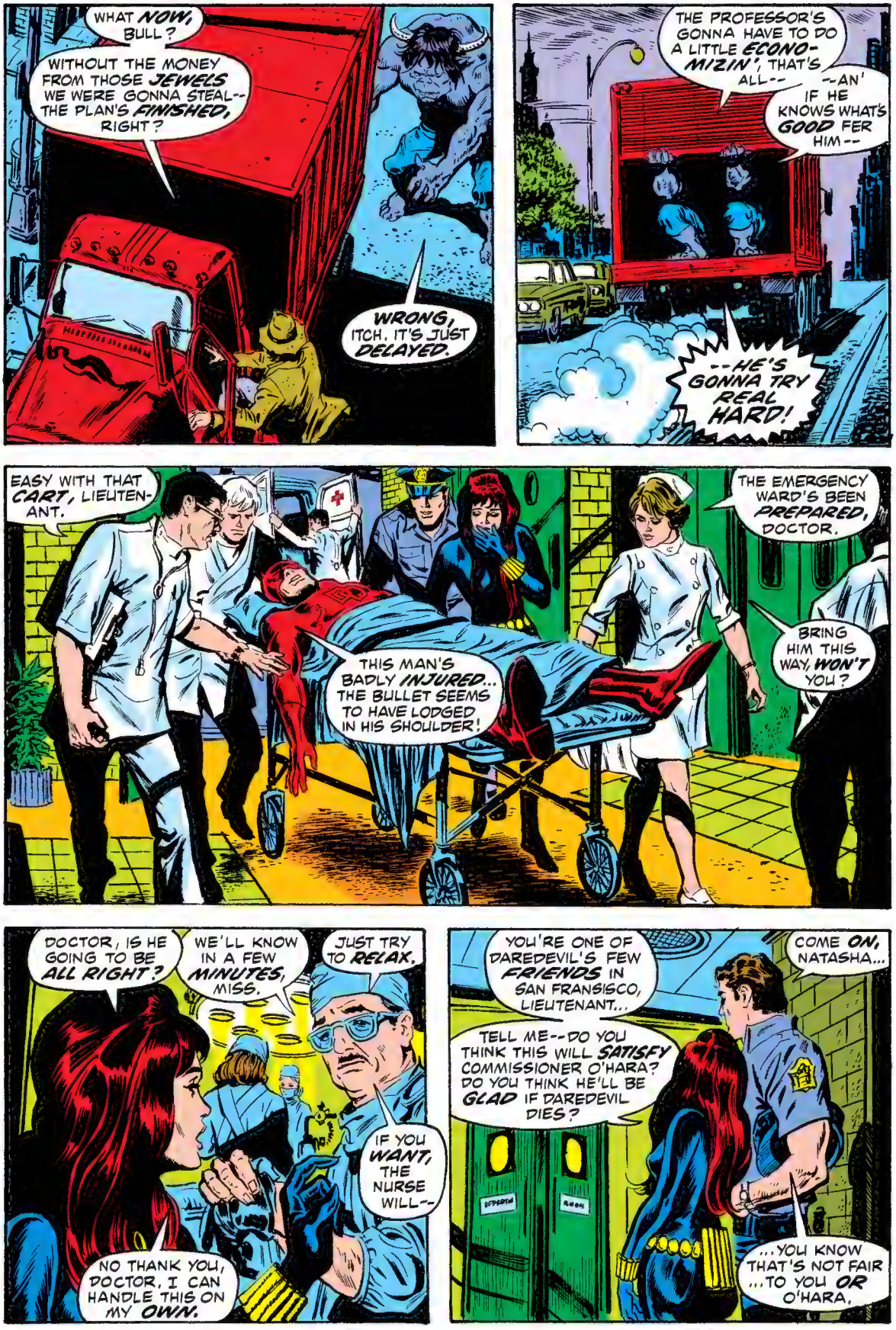

BULL, MY HAND-- SHE BUSTED MY HAND!
SHADDUP, ITCH--
THE BROAD WANTS ACTION --SO SHE'LL GET ACTION--
--MAN-BULL STYLE!

YOU'RE FORGETTING ONE SMALL THING, MY FRIEND--
FFFFT

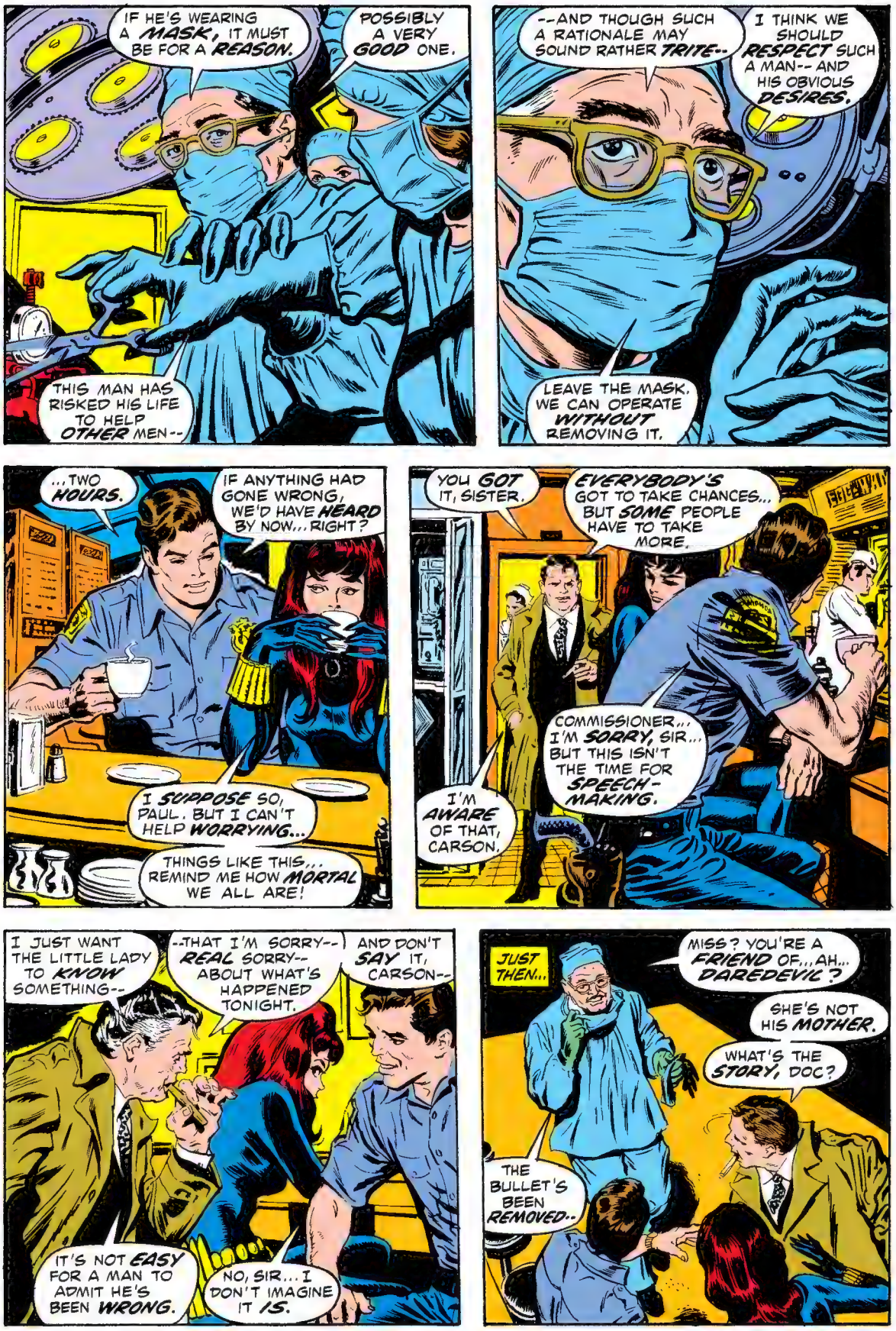

--YOU'RE TALKING TO THE BLACK WIDOW--
--AND WITH ME--
--STYLE IS A WAY OF LIFE!
FREDDIE, DID YOU SEE THAT--?

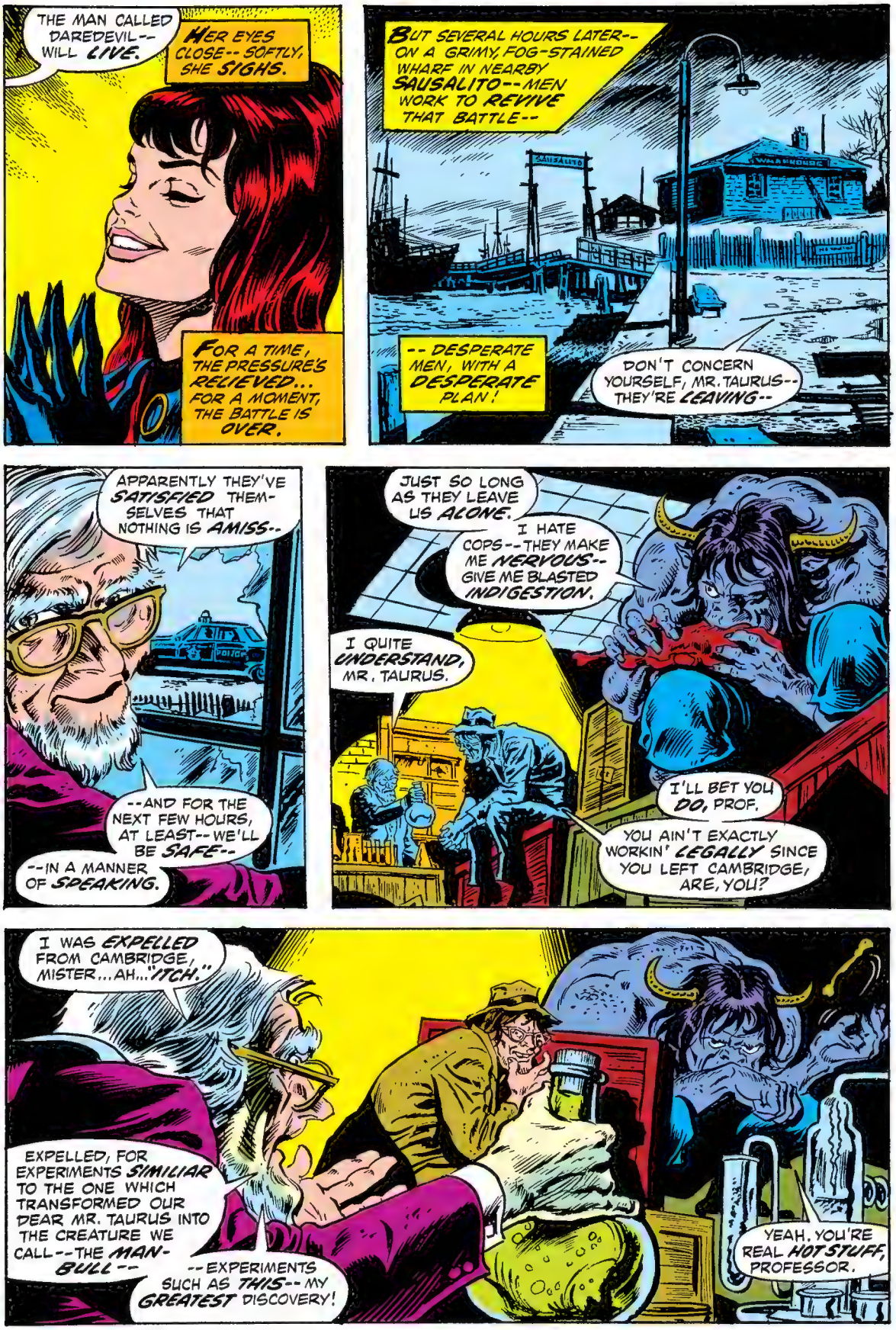

OF COURSE I SAW IT, DUM-DUM! JUST SHUT YOUR TRAP AND KEEP FILMING!
THIS IS GONNA MAKE ONE HECK OF A SPOT ON THE ELEVEN O'CLOCK REPORT!
WAITASECOND-- SHE'S SWINGING AROUND BEHIND HIM--
SHE'S COMING THIS WAY--
LOOK OUT!
WHUMP!
THAT CUTS IT! UP TO NOW, I'VE BEEN HOLDIN' BACK--
--BUT SISTER-- ALL BETS ARE OFF!
DON'T GRANT ME ANY FAVORS--
IF YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED BY NOW--
-- THE WIDOW CAN TAKE CARE OF HERSELF!
ZACK!
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT--
SINGLE-HANDED, MADAME NATASHA HAS BROUGHT HIM TO A STAND-STILL--

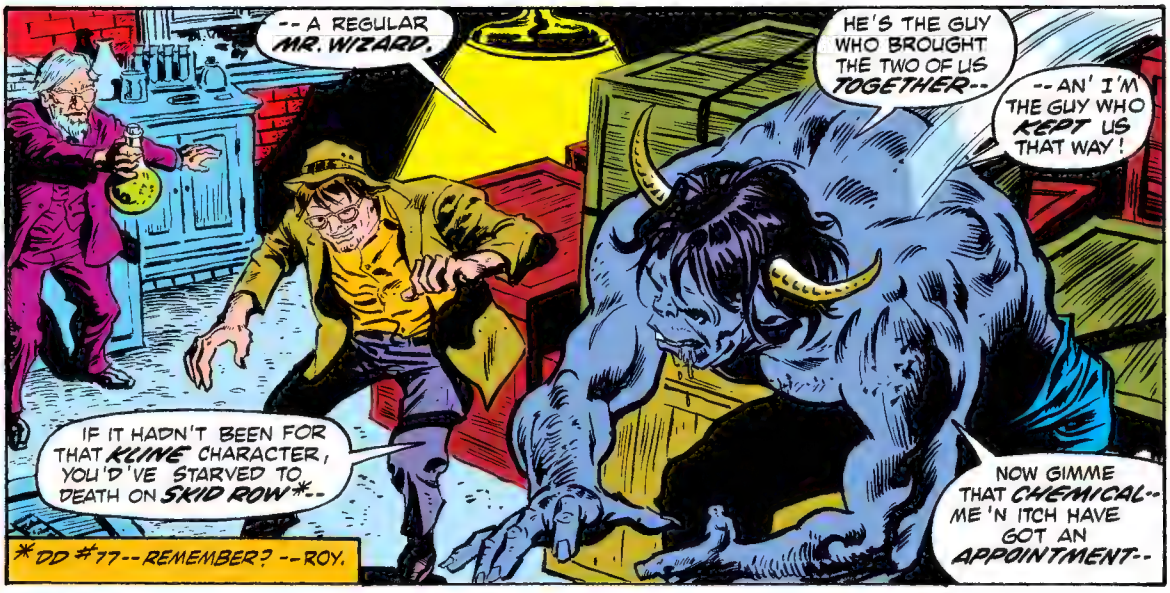
CRACK!
-- AND EVEN NOW, PRESSES THE ATTACK WITH HER WIDOW'S STING!
:AAAARRRH!:
I'M GONNA KILL YOU FOR THAT, WOMAN!
I'M GONNA TEAR YOU APART--
BULL, WE GOTTA MOVE!
THOSE SIRENS-- MORE COPS--!
YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT, ITCH.
CAN'T WASTE TIME HERE... THE PROF'S WAITIN' FOR US!
IF YOU THINK I'M GOING TO--
TASHA...? HELP... ME...!
AS SUDDENLY AS IT CAME, THE SOFT VOICE FADES...
...BUT IT'S ENOUGH... MORE THAN ENOUGH... FOR THE WOMAN CALLED MADAME NATASHA TO CRY OUT IN RELIEF, AND SINK TO TREMBLING KNEES.
FOR A LONG MOMENT, SHE HOLDS THE WOUNDED DAREDEVIL, FORGETTING ALL BUT HER WELLING CONCERN.
THEN, SHE REMEMBERS THE ESCAPING MAN-BULL -- AND BRIEFLY, GLANCES UP --
-- VERY BRIEFLY.
POLICE


WHAT NOW, BULL?
WITHOUT THE MONEY FROM THOSE JEWELS WE WERE GONNA STEAL-- THE PLAN'S FINISHED, RIGHT?
WRONG, ITCH. IT'S JUST DELAYED.
THE PROFESSOR'S GONNA HAVE TO DO A LITTLE ECONO-MIZIN', THAT'S ALL--
--AN' IF HE KNOWS WHAT'S GOOD FER HIM--
--HE'S GONNA TRY REAL HARD!
EASY WITH THAT CART, LIEUTEN-ANT.
THIS MAN'S BADLY INJURED... THE BULLET SEEMS TO HAVE LODGED IN HIS SHOULDER!
THE EMERGENCY WARD'S BEEN PREPARED, DOCTOR.
BRING HIM THIS WAY, WON'T YOU?
DOCTOR, IS HE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT?
WE'LL KNOW IN A FEW MINUTES, MISS.
JUST TRY TO RELAX.
IF YOU WANT, THE NURSE WILL--
NO THANK YOU, DOCTOR. I CAN HANDLE THIS ON MY OWN.
YOU'RE ONE OF DAREDEVIL'S FEW FRIENDS IN SAN FRANSISCO, LIEUTENANT...
TELL ME--DO YOU THINK THIS WILL SATISFY COMMISSIONER O'HARA? DO YOU THINK HE'LL BE GLAD IF DAREDEVIL DIES?
COME ON, NATASHA...
...YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT FAIR ...TO YOU OR O'HARA.

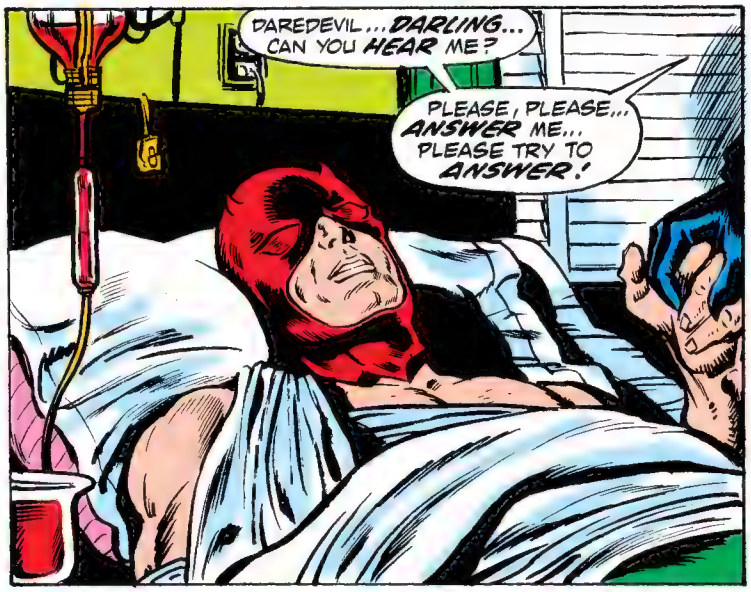
THE COMMISSIONER MAY HAVE BEEN A LITTLE ROUGH ON YOU TWO NEW YORK EXPATRIATES...
...BUT HE'LL BE AS UNHAPPY ABOUT THIS AS YOU ARE,
I DOUBT IT, LIEUTENANT.
I SINCERELY DO.
LOOKS LIKE CARSON'S GOT HIMSELF A NEW LADY, BOB.
DON'T KID YOURSELF, RAY.
THE MASKED MAN'S GOT HER SEWN UP TIGHT.
YEAH-- THAT'S ANOTHER THING.
WHY D'YA SUPPOSE HE WEARS THAT CRAZY COSTUME?
PERATING
I MEAN...
... GUYS LIKE US WORK THE SAME BEAT HE DOES, AND WE DON'T RUN AROUND IN OUR BLASTED LONG JOHNS.
HE'S FROM NEW YORK, ISN'T HE?
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT INTERESTS ME, RAY...
OPERATING
SAN FRANCISCO
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS-- WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO WITH THAT MASK OF HIS? ANSWER ME THAT!
WAIT, NURSE--

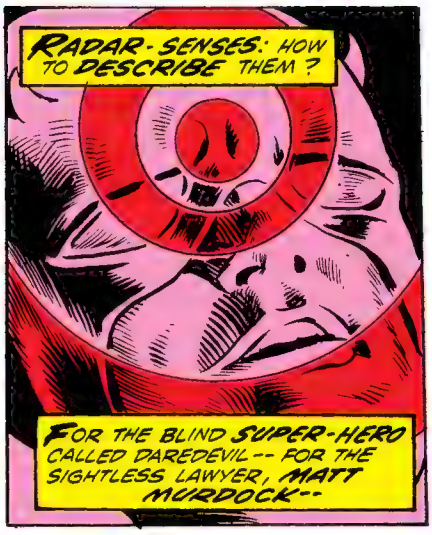

IF HE'S WEARING A MASK, IT MUST BE FOR A REASON.
POSSIBLY A VERY GOOD ONE.
THIS MAN HAS RISKED HIS LIFE TO HELP OTHER MEN--
--AND THOUGH SUCH A RATIONALE MAY SOUND RATHER TRITE--
I THINK WE SHOULD RESPECT SUCH A MAN-- AND HIS OBVIOUS DESIRES.
LEAVE THE MASK. WE CAN OPERATE WITHOUT REMOVING IT.
...TWO HOURS.
IF ANYTHING HAD GONE WRONG, WE'D HAVE HEARD BY NOW... RIGHT?
I SUPPOSE SO, PAUL. BUT I CAN'T HELP WORRYING...
THINGS LIKE THIS... REMIND ME HOW MORTAL WE ALL ARE!
YOU GOT IT, SISTER.
EVERYBODY'S GOT TO TAKE CHANCES... BUT SOME PEOPLE HAVE TO TAKE MORE.
COMMISSIONER... I'M SORRY, SIR... BUT THIS ISN'T THE TIME FOR SPEECH-MAKING.
I'M AWARE OF THAT, CARSON.
I JUST WANT THE LITTLE LADY TO KNOW SOMETHING--
--THAT I'M SORRY-- REAL SORRY-- ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TONIGHT.
AND DON'T SAY IT, CARSON--
IT'S NOT EASY FOR A MAN TO ADMIT HE'S BEEN WRONG.
NO, SIR... I DON'T IMAGINE IT IS.
JUST THEN...
MISS? YOU'RE A FRIEND OF... AH... DAREDEVIL?
SHE'S NOT HIS MOTHER.
WHAT'S THE STORY, DOC?
THE BULLET'S BEEN REMOVED..

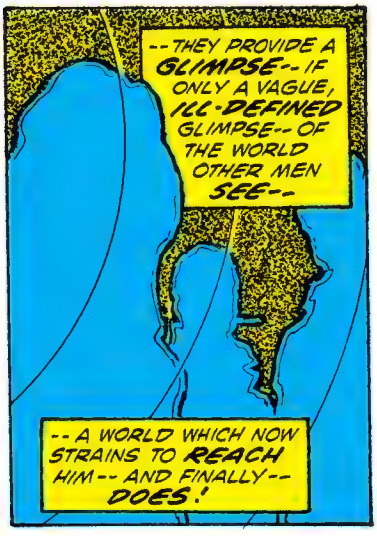

THE MAN CALLED DAREDEVIL-- WILL LIVE.
HER EYES CLOSE-- SOFTLY, SHE SIGHS.
FOR A TIME, THE PRESSURE'S RELIEVED... FOR A MOMENT, THE BATTLE IS OVER.
BUT SEVERAL HOURS LATER-- ON A GRIMY, FOG-STAINED WHARF IN NEARBY SAUSALITO--MEN WORK TO REVIVE THAT BATTLE--
SAUSALITO
-- DESPERATE MEN, WITH A DESPERATE PLAN!
DON'T CONCERN YOURSELF, MR. TAURUS-- THEY'RE LEAVING--
APPARENTLY THEY'VE SATISFIED THEMSELVES THAT NOTHING IS AMISS--
POLICE
--AND FOR THE NEXT FEW HOURS, AT LEAST-- WE'LL BE SAFE--
--IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING.
JUST SO LONG AS THEY LEAVE US ALONE.
I HATE COPS--THEY MAKE ME NERVOUS-- GIVE ME BLASTED INDIGESTION.
I QUITE UNDERSTAND, MR. TAURUS.
I'LL BET YOU DO, PROF.
YOU AIN'T EXACTLY WORKIN' LEGALLY SINCE YOU LEFT CAMBRIDGE, ARE, YOU?
I WAS EXPELLED FROM CAMBRIDGE, MISTER... AH... "ITCH."
EXPELLED, FOR EXPERIMENTS SIMILIAR TO THE ONE WHICH TRANSFORMED OUR DEAR MR. TAURUS INTO THE CREATURE WE CALL--THE MAN-BULL--
--EXPERIMENTS SUCH AS THIS--MY GREATEST DISCOVERY!
YEAH, YOU'RE REAL HOTSTUFF, PROFESSOR.


-- A REGULAR MR. WIZARD.
HE'S THE GUY WHO BROUGHT THE TWO OF US TOGETHER--
-- AN' I'M THE GUY WHO KEPT US THAT WAY!
IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THAT KLINE CHARACTER, YOU'D'VE STARVED TO DEATH ON SKID ROW*--
NOW GIMME THAT CHEMICAL-- ME 'N ITCH HAVE GOT AN APPOINTMENT--
*DD #77--REMEMBER? --ROY.

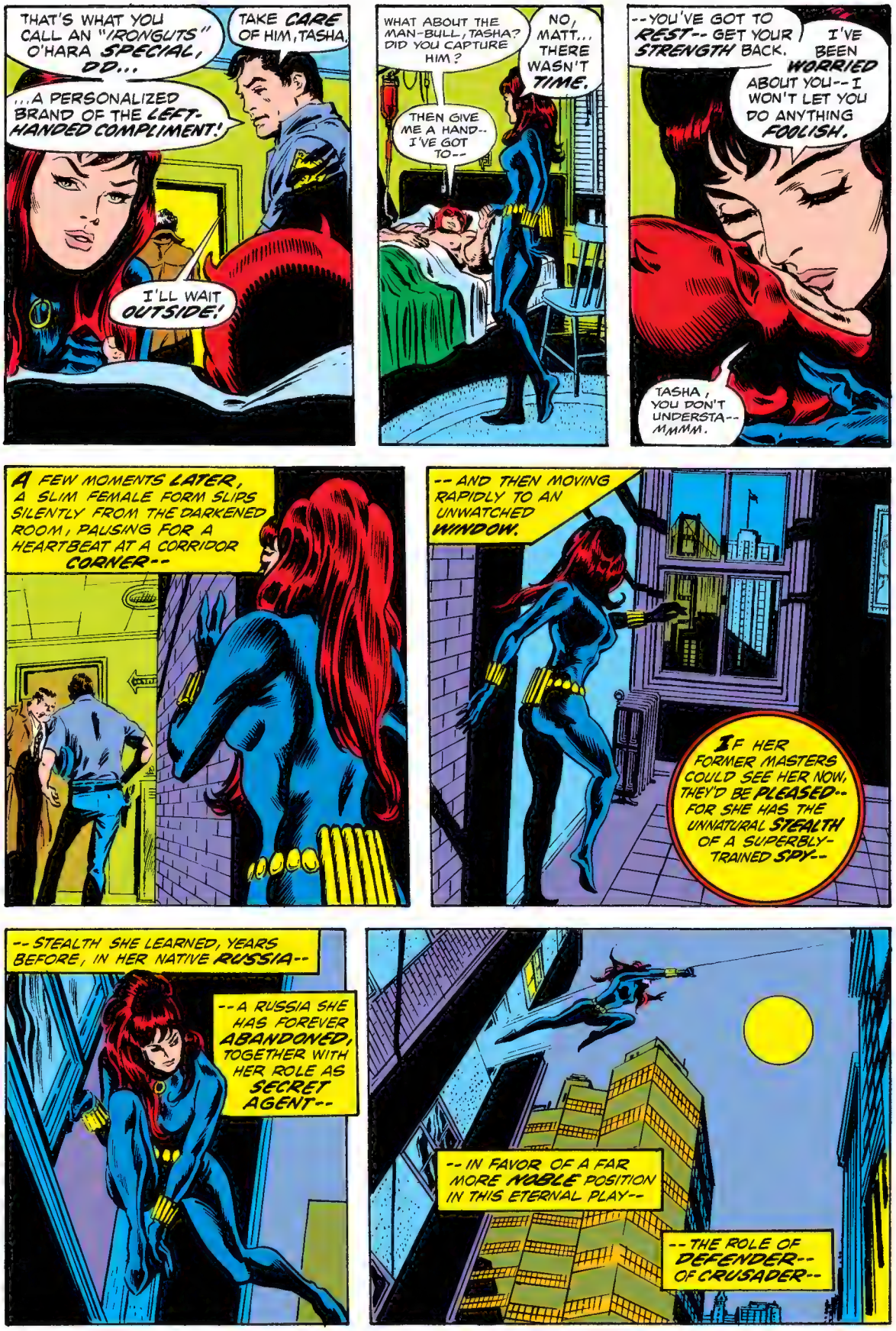
WITH THE SAN FRANCISCO WATER-WORKS!

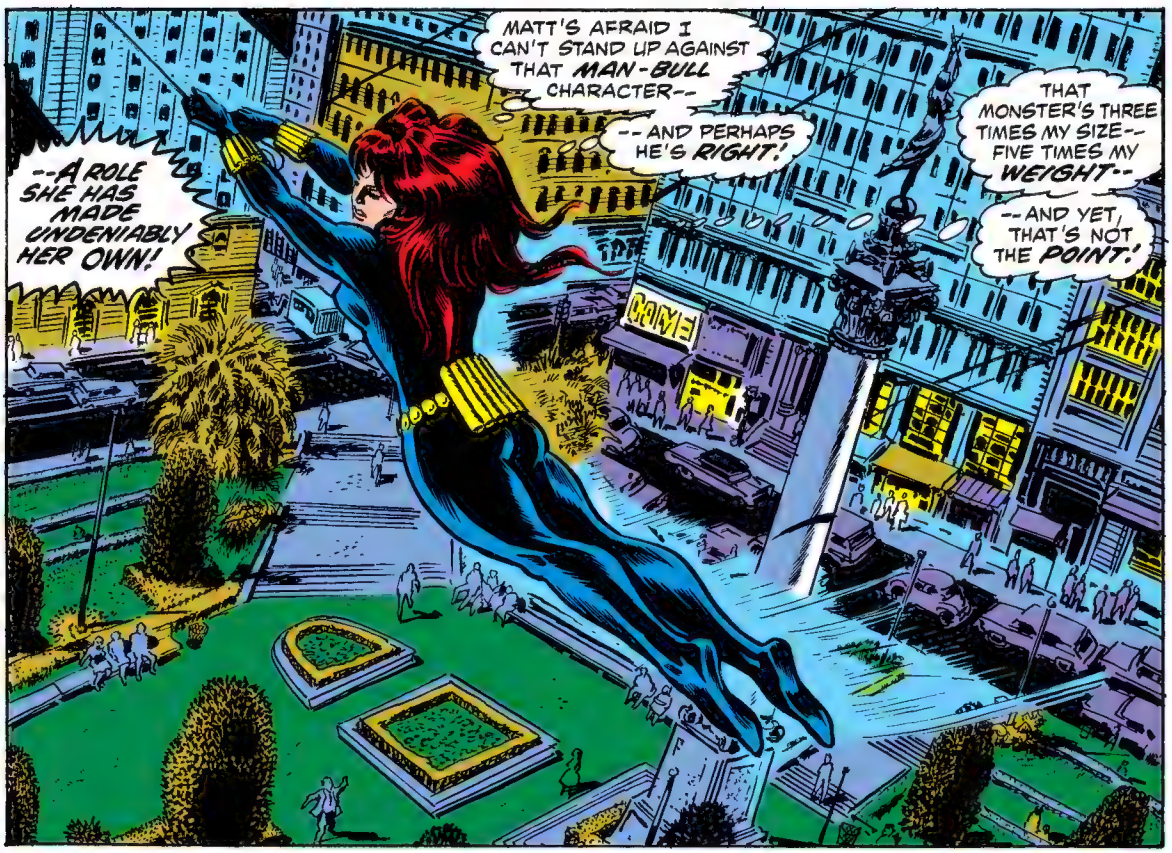

DAREDEVIL... DARLING... CAN YOU HEAR ME?
PLEASE, PLEASE... ANSWER ME... PLEASE TRY TO ANSWER!

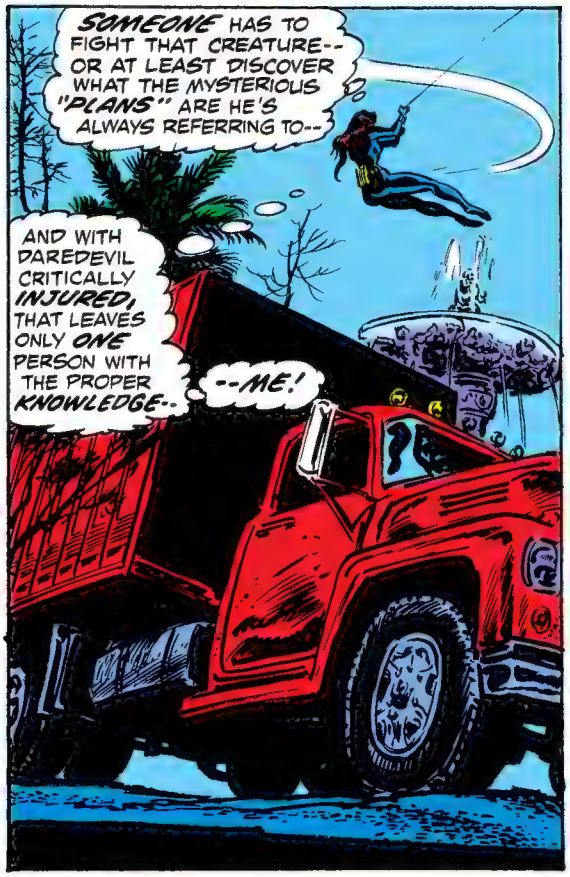

RADAR-SENSES: HOW TO DESCRIBE THEM?
FOR THE BLIND SUPER-HERO CALLED DAREDEVIL-- FOR THE SIGHTLESS LAWYER, MATT MURDOCK--


--THEY PROVIDE A GLIMPSE-- IF ONLY A VAGUE, ILL-DEFINED GLIMPSE-- OF THE WORLD OTHER MEN SEE--
--A WORLD WHICH NOW STRAINS TO REACH HIM-- AND FINALLY-- DOES!

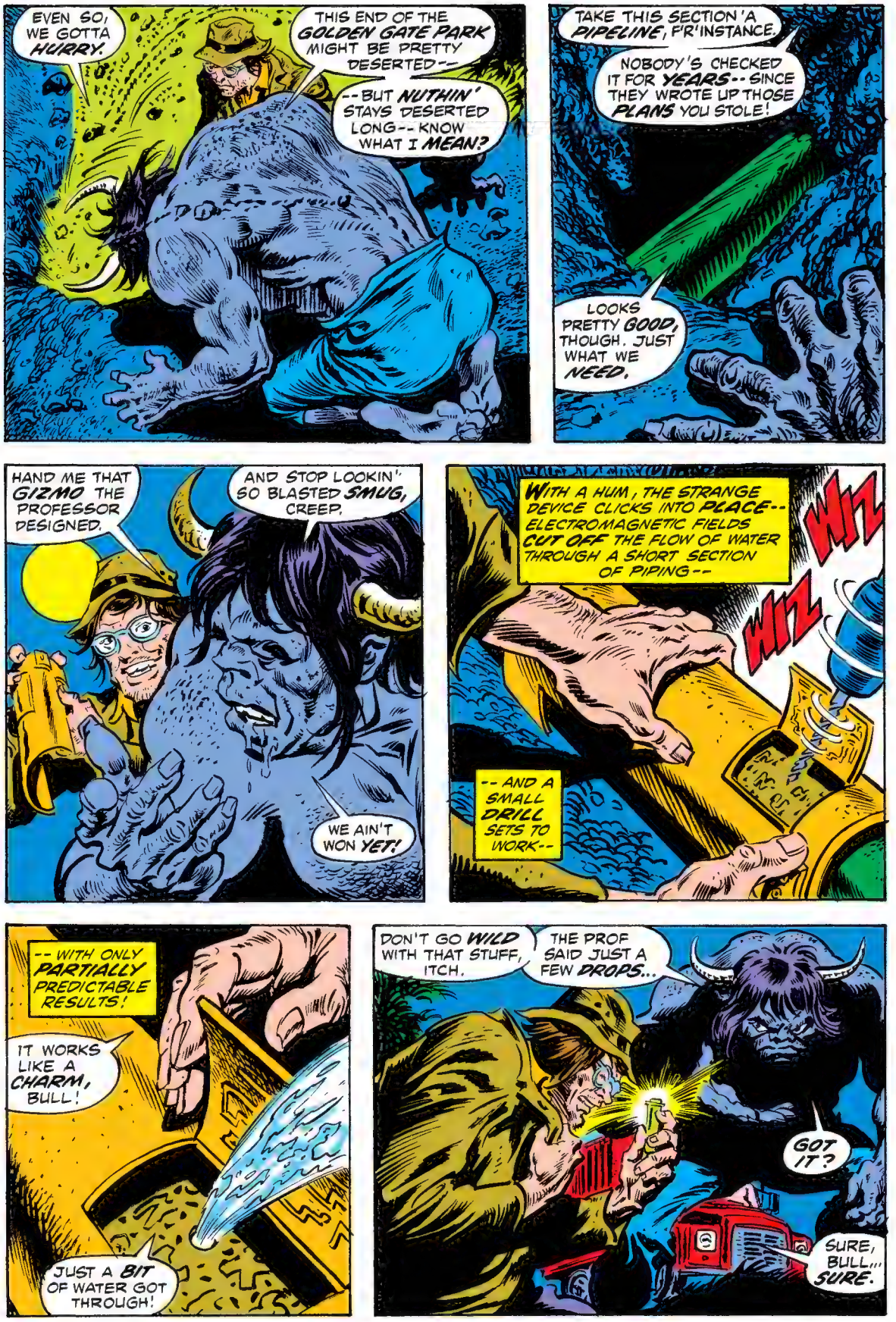
NATASHA... COMMISSIONER O'HARA?
YEAH-- IT'S US, HORN-HEAD.
JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU TO GET WELL--
--AN' TO LET YOU KNOW THINGS ARE SQUARE BETWEEN US,
FOR NOW.


THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL AN "IRONGUTS" O'HARA SPECIAL, DD...
TAKE CARE OF HIM, TASHA.
...A PERSONALIZED BRAND OF THE LEFT-HANDED COMPLIMENT!
I'LL WAIT OUTSIDE!
WHAT ABOUT THE MAN-BULL, TASHA? DID YOU CAPTURE HIM?
NO, MATT... THERE WASN'T TIME.
THEN GIVE ME A HAND-- I'VE GOT TO--
--YOU'VE GOT TO REST-- GET YOUR STRENGTH BACK.
I'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT YOU-- I WON'T LET YOU DO ANYTHING FOOLISH.
TASHA, YOU DON'T UNDERSTA-- MMMM.
A FEW MOMENTS LATER, A SLIM FEMALE FORM SLIPS SILENTLY FROM THE DARKENED ROOM, PAUSING FOR A HEARTBEAT AT A CORRIDOR CORNER--
--AND THEN MOVING RAPIDLY TO AN UNWATCHED WINDOW.
IF HER FORMER MASTERS COULD SEE HER NOW, THEY'D BE PLEASED-- FOR SHE HAS THE UNNATURAL STEALTH OF A SUPERBLY-TRAINED SPY--
--STEALTH SHE LEARNED, YEARS BEFORE, IN HER NATIVE RUSSIA--
--A RUSSIA SHE HAS FOREVER ABANDONED, TOGETHER WITH HER ROLE AS SECRET AGENT--
--IN FAVOR OF A FAR MORE NOBLE POSITION IN THIS ETERNAL PLAY--
--THE ROLE OF DEFENDER-- OF CRUSADER--


--A ROLE SHE HAS MADE UNDENIABLY HER OWN!
MATT'S AFRAID I CAN'T STAND UP AGAINST THAT MAN-BULL CHARACTER--
--AND PERHAPS HE'S RIGHT!
THAT MONSTER'S THREE TIMES MY SIZE-- FIVE TIMES MY WEIGHT--
--AND YET, THAT'S NOT THE POINT!
CAFE


SOMEONE HAS TO FIGHT THAT CREATURE-- OR AT LEAST DISCOVER WHAT THE MYSTERIOUS "PLANS" ARE HE'S ALWAYS REFERRING TO--
AND WITH DAREDEVIL CRITICALLY INJURED, THAT LEAVES ONLY ONE PERSON WITH THE PROPER KNOWLEDGE--
--ME!

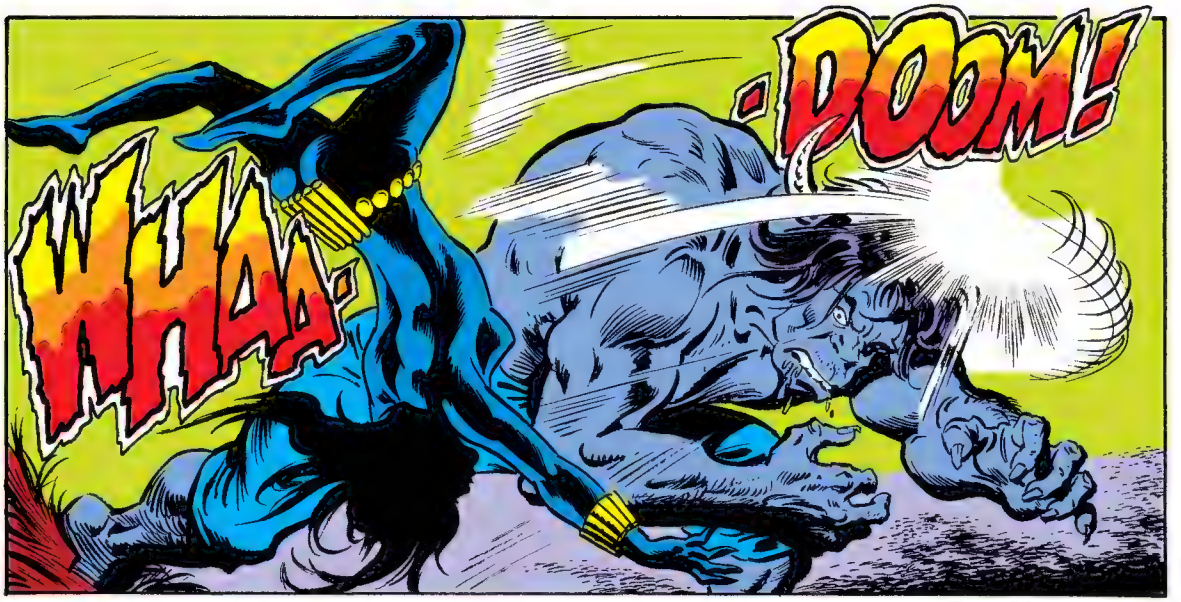
GOOD THING FOR HER SHE DIDN'T SEE THAT CRUMMY TRUCK OF YOURS, ITCH.
WE WOULD'VE HAD TO HURT HER A LITTLE--
--AND THAT MIGHT HAVE COMPLICATED THINGS.

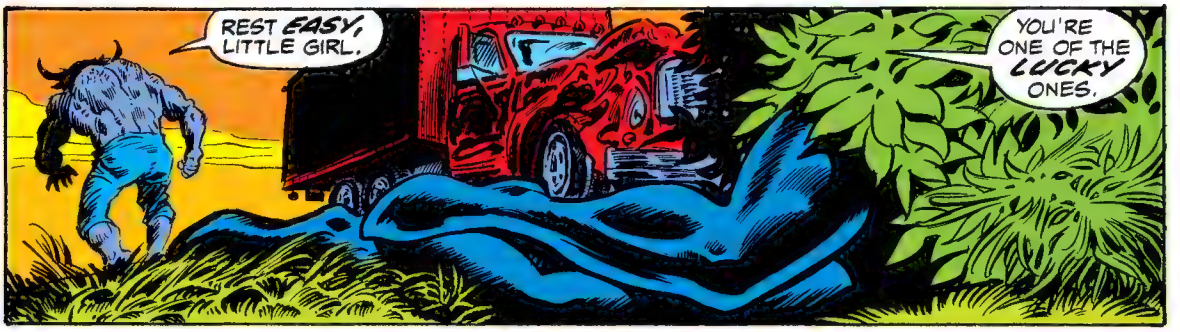

EVEN SO, WE GOTTA HURRY.
THIS END OF THE GOLDEN GATE PARK MIGHT BE PRETTY DESERTED--
--BUT NUTHIN' STAYS DESERTED LONG--KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
TAKE THIS SECTION 'A PIPELINE, FR'INSTANCE.
NOBODY'S CHECKED IT FOR YEARS--SINCE THEY WROTE UP THOSE PLANS YOU STOLE!
LOOKS PRETTY GOOD, THOUGH. JUST WHAT WE NEED.
HAND ME THAT GIZMO THE PROFESSOR DESIGNED.
AND STOP LOOKIN' SO BLASTED SMUG, CREEP.
WE AIN'T WON YET!
WITH A HUM, THE STRANGE DEVICE CLICKS INTO PLACE--ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS CUT OFF THE FLOW OF WATER THROUGH A SHORT SECTION OF PIPING--
WIZ
WIZ
--AND A SMALL DRILL SETS TO WORK--
--WITH ONLY PARTIALLY PREDICTABLE RESULTS!
IT WORKS LIKE A CHARM, BULL!
JUST A BIT OF WATER GOT THROUGH!
DON'T GO WILD WITH THAT STUFF, ITCH.
THE PROF SAID JUST A FEW DROPS...
GOT IT?
SURE, BULL... SURE.

SNAP!
CLICK!
WELL, THAT DOES IT, THE WATER'S MOVIN' AGAIN.
THIS TIME, THOUGH, IT'S CARRYIN' SOMETHING SPECIAL, RIGHT, BULL?
BULL?
BULL! NOOOO!
WHOMP!
I'M SICK OF YOU, PUNK!
AND NOW THAT I DON'T NEED YOU ANY MORE--
YOUR TICKET'S BEEN BOUGHT!
"WHEN THIEVES FALL OUT," EH, MY FRIEND?
DON'T YOU THINK THAT MOVE WAS PREMATURE?
YOU!

YOU DIDN'T REALLY BELIEVE I'D MISSED THIS TRUCK, DID YOU, BULL?
YOU'RE SMART, GIRLIE--
I'D CALL THAT A FATAL CASE OF WISHFUL-THINKING-- "MAN-BULL STYLE!"
--MAYBE TOO SMART FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!
THAT'S SOMETHING WE'LL HAVE TO FIND OUT, ISN'T IT?
YEAH--AND FIND OUT NOW!
BAKBOM!

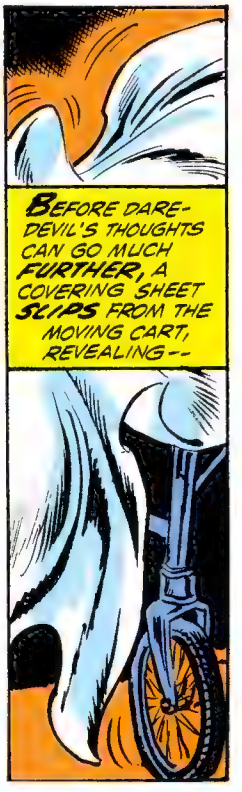
I WAS WONDERING WHAT SORT OF GAME YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING, FRIEND--
OH?
--AND NOW I THINK I'M BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND!
YOU WISH, LADY! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND NUTHIN'!
BUT I THINK I DO-- YES, I THINK I DO, INDEED!
YOU'RE POISONING THE WATER-SUPPLY--
ZZZACK!
--BUT WITH WHAT--?
--THAT BECOMES THE QUESTION!
CHUNT!
THINK YOU'RE CUTE, DON'T YOU-- THINK THAT BLASTED STING OF YOURS CAN STOP ANYTHING!
WELL, I WAS READY THAT TIME, SISTER-- BRACED MYSELF--
-- AND MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO BRACE YOURSELF, LITTLE GIRL--
-- 'CAUSE IN CASE YOU HADN'T GUESSED--
--YOU JUST MADE ME MAD!


WHAM!
-BOOM!

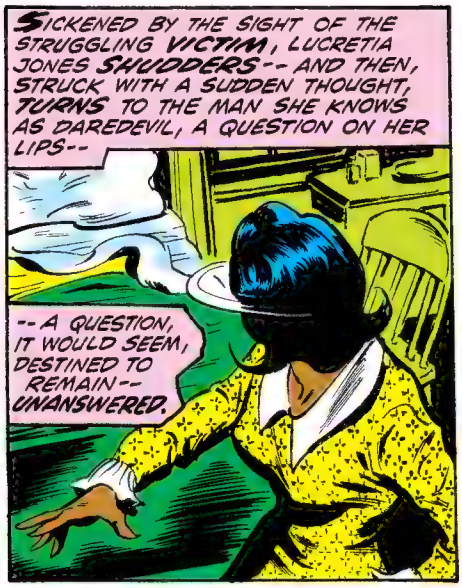

REST EASY, LITTLE GIRL.
YOU'RE ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES.

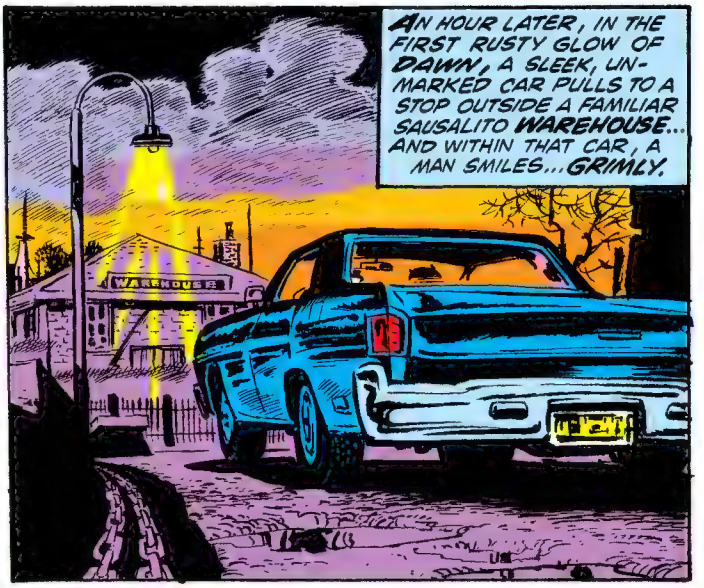
...THIS IS LUCRETIA JONES, OF KGG-TV, TALKING WITH THE MASKED VIGILANTE KNOWN AS DAREDEVIL.
COULD YOU TELL US WHAT YOU THINK IS THE REASON FOR BULL TAURUS' ATTACKING YOU?
REASON? I'M NOT SURE HE HAS ONE.
WE FOUGHT ONCE BEFORE, IN NEW YORK-- BUT THAT MATTER WAS RESOLVED.*
*IN DD #78, BIBLIOPHILES. --ROY.

THEN YOU CONSIDER HIS ASSAULT UNPROVOKED?
THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME SORT OF COMMOTION, LU.
ACCORDING TO POLICE REPORTS ON YOUR PREVIOUS ENCOUNTER, TAURUS WAS THE VICTIM OF SOME BIOCHEMICAL EXPERIMENT--BLAMING YOU FOR THE CHANGE WHICH--
SOMEONE'S BEING WHEELED INTO THE EMERGENCY WARD--
I CAN SENSE SOME SORT OF STRUGGLE-- A RACING HEARTBEAT-- WHAT--?

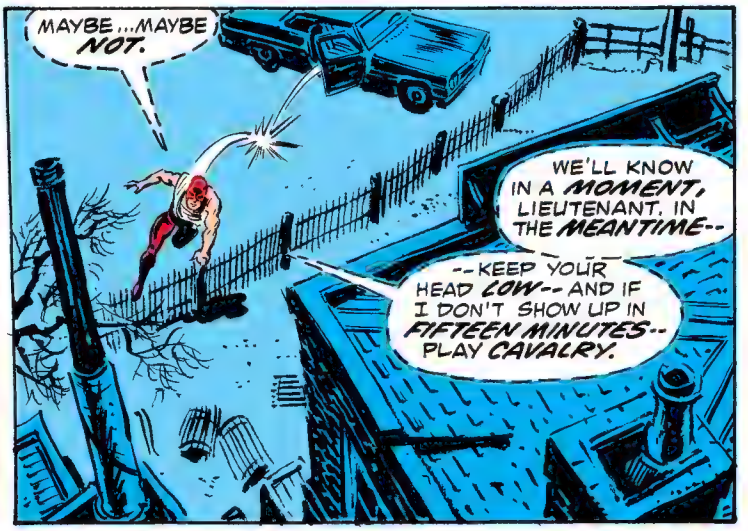

BEFORE DAREDEVIL'S THOUGHTS CAN GO MUCH FURTHER, A COVERING SHEET SLIPS FROM THE MOVING CART, REVEALING--

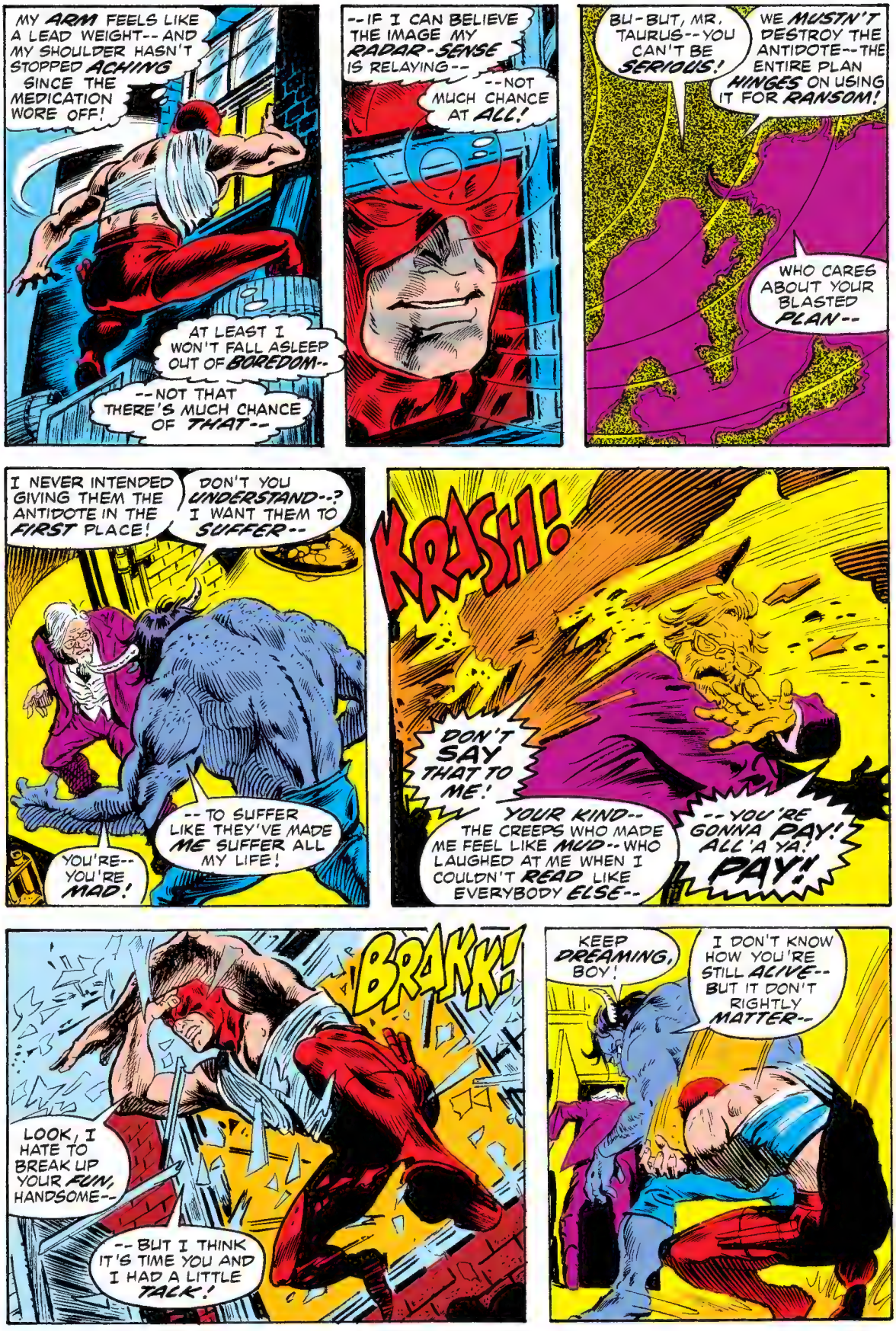
LORD IN HEAVEN-- IT'S SOME SORT OF MONSTER!
DOCTOR, WHAT IS IT?
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM?
WE DON'T KNOW-- BUT IT SEEMS HE'S NOT ALONE!
THE OTHER HOSPITALS HAVE REPORTED SIMILAR CASES THESE PAST FEW HOURS--
WHATEVER IT IS-- IT'S SPREADING-- LIKE A BLASTED PLAGUE!


SICKENED BY THE SIGHT OF THE STRUGGLING VICTIM, LUCRETIA JONES SHUDDERS-- AND THEN, STRUCK WITH A SUDDEN THOUGHT, TURNS TO THE MAN SHE KNOWS AS DAREDEVIL, A QUESTION ON HER LIPS--
-- A QUESTION, IT WOULD SEEM, DESTINED TO REMAIN-- UNANSWERED.

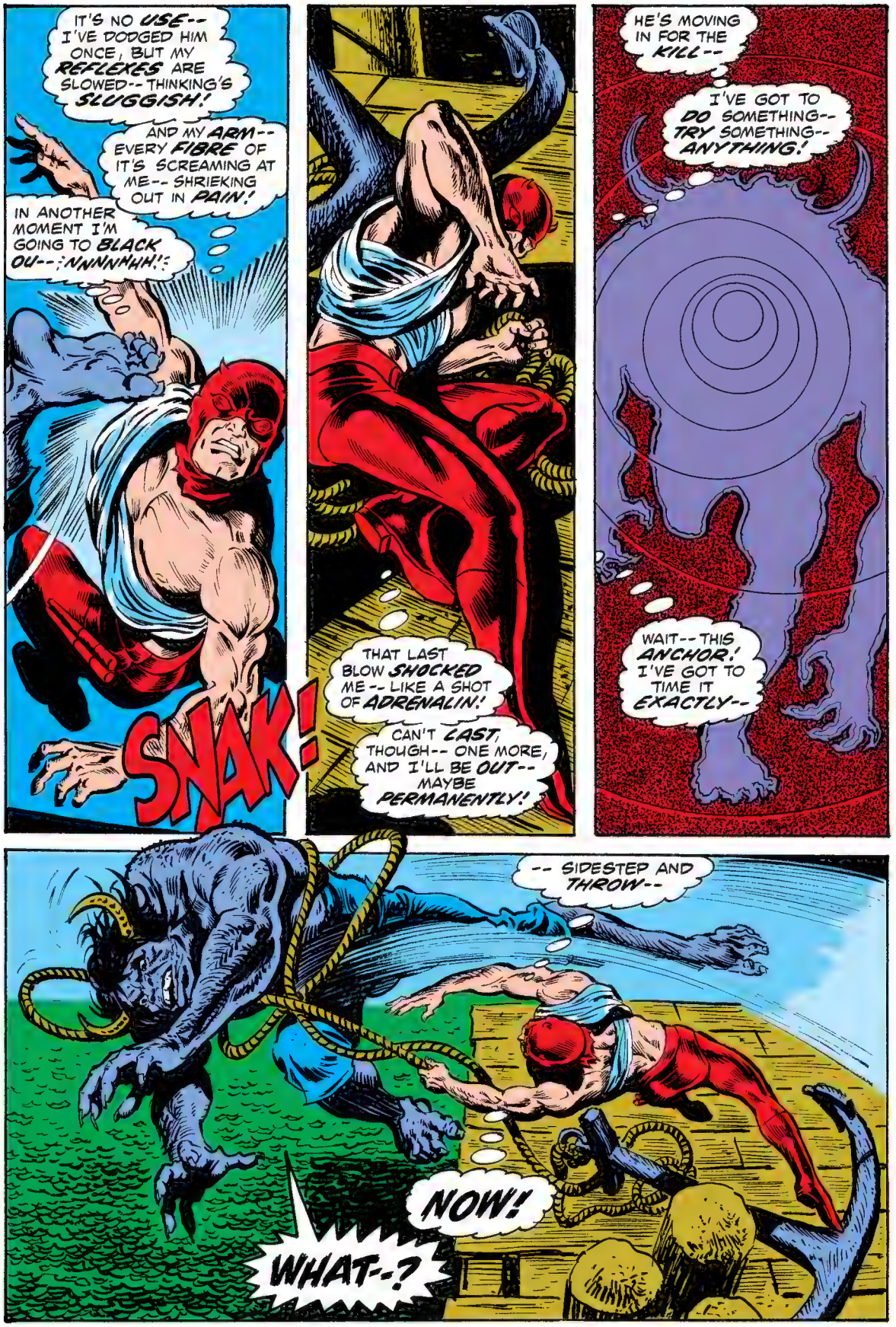

AN HOUR LATER, IN THE FIRST RUSTY GLOW OF DAWN, A SLEEK, UNMARKED CAR PULLS TO A STOP OUTSIDE A FAMILIAR SAUSALITO WAREHOUSE... AND WITHIN THAT CAR, A MAN SMILES... GRIMLY.
WAREHOUSE

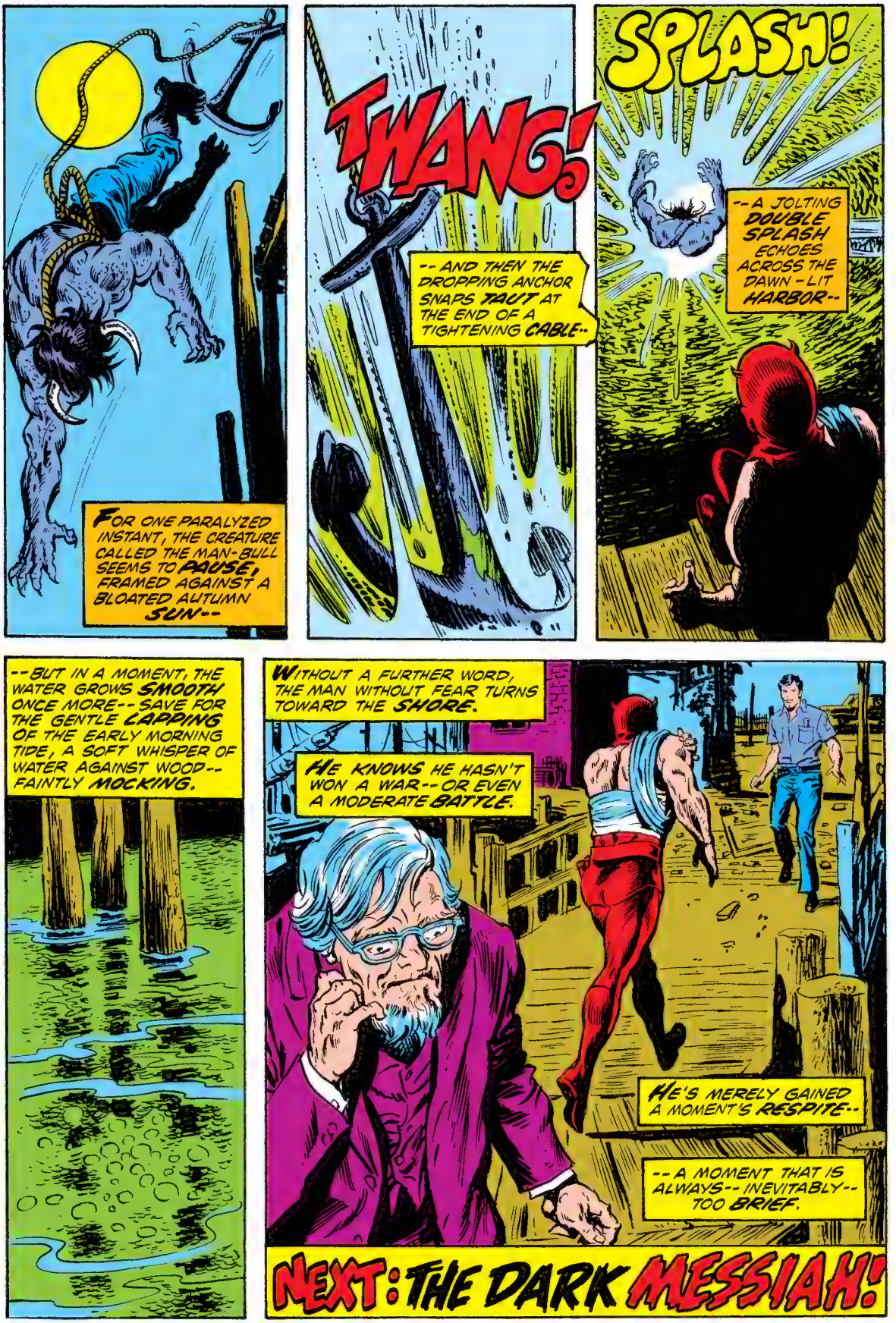
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, PAUL.
WHAT HELP? I CHECKED THIS PLACE OUT WHEN WE GOT OUR FIRST REPORT ON THAT RIFLE.
IT'S EMPTY, DD.
YOU'RE FOLLOWING A BAD LEAD.


MAYBE...MAYBE NOT.
WE'LL KNOW IN A MOMENT, LIEUTENANT. IN THE MEANTIME--
--KEEP YOUR HEAD LOW-- AND IF I DON'T SHOW UP IN FIFTEEN MINUTES-- PLAY CAVALRY.


MY ARM FEELS LIKE A LEAD WEIGHT-- AND MY SHOULDER HASN'T STOPPED ACHING SINCE THE MEDICATION WORE OFF!
AT LEAST I WON'T FALL ASLEEP OUT OF BOREDOM--
--NOT THAT THERE'S MUCH CHANCE OF THAT--
--IF I CAN BELIEVE THE IMAGE MY RADAR-SENSE IS RELAYING--
--NOT MUCH CHANCE AT ALL!
BU-BUT, MR. TAURUS--YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
WE MUSTN'T DESTROY THE ANTIDOTE--THE ENTIRE PLAN HINGES ON USING IT FOR RANSOM!
WHO CARES ABOUT YOUR BLASTED PLAN--
I NEVER INTENDED GIVING THEM THE ANTIDOTE IN THE FIRST PLACE!
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND--? I WANT THEM TO SUFFER--
--TO SUFFER LIKE THEY'VE MADE ME SUFFER ALL MY LIFE!
YOU'RE--YOU'RE MAD!
KRASH!
DON'T SAY THAT TO ME!
YOUR KIND--THE CREEPS WHO MADE ME FEEL LIKE MUD--WHO LAUGHED AT ME WHEN I COULDN'T READ LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE--
--YOU'RE GONNA PAY! ALL'A YA! PAY!
BRAKK!
LOOK, I HATE TO BREAK UP YOUR FUN, HANDSOME--
--BUT I THINK IT'S TIME YOU AND I HAD A LITTLE TALK!
KEEP DREAMING, BOY!
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU'RE STILL ALIVE--BUT IT DON'T RIGHTLY MATTER--

--YOU'RE TOO WEAK TO EVEN BOTHER KILLIN'!
HE'S RIGHT-- MY ARM'S ON FIRE-- MUST'VE OPENED UP THE WOUND AGAIN!
PAIN-- UNBEARABLE--!
THAT'S RIGHT, PROFESSOR-- RUN!
YOU'RE JUST MAKIN' WHAT I HAVE TO DO EASIER--
--NOW THAT I JUST REALIZED--
--TO GET RID OF THAT ANTIDOTE--
--I'VE GOTTA GET RID OF YOU!
THUNK!
THE PROBLEM WITH YOU, BULL, IS YOUR ANTI-SOCIAL ATTITUDE.
COULDN'T WE TALK THIS OVER A LITTLE?
AFTER ALL, YOU DON'T REALLY WANT TO TURN EVERYONE IN SAN FRANCISCO INTO A MONSTER.
HOW ABOUT A RATIONAL DISCUSSION, HM?
I GUESS NOT.
SCRUFF
SCRUFF
SNORT!
SNORT


IT'S NO USE-- I'VE DODGED HIM ONCE, BUT MY REFLEXES ARE SLOWED-- THINKING'S SLUGGISH!
AND MY ARM-- EVERY FIBRE OF IT'S SCREAMING AT ME-- SHRIEKING OUT IN PAIN!
IN ANOTHER MOMENT I'M GOING TO BLACK OU--;NNNNHHH!;
SNAK!
THAT LAST BLOW SHOCKED ME-- LIKE A SHOT OF ADRENALIN!
CAN'T LAST, THOUGH-- ONE MORE, AND I'LL BE OUT-- MAYBE PERMANENTLY!
HE'S MOVING IN FOR THE KILL--
I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING-- TRY SOMETHING-- ANYTHING!
WAIT-- THIS ANCHOR! I'VE GOT TO TIME IT EXACTLY--
-- SIDESTEP AND THROW--
NOW!
WHAT--?


FOR ONE PARALYZED INSTANT, THE CREATURE CALLED THE MAN-BULL SEEMS TO PAUSE, FRAMED AGAINST A BLOATED AUTUMN SUN--
TWANG!
--AND THEN THE DROPPING ANCHOR SNAPS TAUT AT THE END OF A TIGHTENING CABLE--
SPLASH!
--A JOLTING DOUBLE SPLASH ECHOES ACROSS THE DAWN-LIT HARBOR--
--BUT IN A MOMENT, THE WATER GROWS SMOOTH ONCE MORE--SAVE FOR THE GENTLE LAPPING OF THE EARLY MORNING TIDE, A SOFT WHISPER OF WATER AGAINST WOOD--FAINTLY MOCKING.
WITHOUT A FURTHER WORD, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR TURNS TOWARD THE SHORE.
HE KNOWS HE HASN'T WON A WAR--OR EVEN A MODERATE BATTLE.
HE'S MERELY GAINED A MOMENT'S RESPITE--
--A MOMENT THAT IS ALWAYS--INEVITABLY--TOO BRIEF.
NEXT: THE DARK MESSIAH!

Daredevil #91, page 10 original art
by Gene Colan & Tom Palmer

Daredevil #91
15
I'M TALKING ABOUT YOUR USING THE GLOBE--THE POWER-SOURCE WE STOLE FROM PROJECT FOUR--
--USING IT AGAINST ME--AND AGAINST DAREDEVIL!
DAREDEVIL?
LOOK, KID--SURE, I'VE GOT THE GLOBE--BUT YOU'VE GOTTA BELIEVE ME--
I'VE NEVER FIGURED OUT HOW IT WORKS--
--IT'S USELESS TO ME--ABSOLUTELY WORTHLESS!
I ASK YOU TASHA--WOULD I BE PLAYING WITH NICKELS AND DIMES LIKE THE FREDRICKS CASE--
--IF I HAD THE POWER YOU CLAIM I DO?
NO, DANNY... I SUPPOSE NOT.
THEN...THE ANSWER'S ELSEWHERE...
"...AN ANSWER ONLY DAREDEVIL CAN FIND!"
NATASHA WORRIES ME... SHE'S BECOME OBSESSED WITH THIS DANNY FRENCH ANGLE...
...AND BECAUSE OF IT, WE'VE BOTH OVERLOOKED THE OBVIOUS ANSWER...!
OF COURSE, THE OBVIOUS ANSWER ISN'T ALWAYS THE MOST PRACTICAL...
...FOR, IF I'M RIGHT, THE MAN BEHIND THESE ATTACKS OF FRIGHT...
Gene Colan
...IS DEAD!
15
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

Courtesy Sean Clarke

BIOGRAPHIES

GERRY CONWAY

In 1969, 16-year-old Gerry Conway was shopping short stories to DC and Marvel for their horror anthology books. By 1976, Conway had worked his way up to Marvel's editor in chief. In between, he logged highlight after highlight as writer for both companies.

After establishing a pedigree with horror short stories, Conway quickly became the regular writer of *Daredevil*, *Sub-Mariner* and *Iron Man*. He also began runs on *The Amazing Spider-Man* and *Thor*, picking up both titles from none other than Stan Lee. He scripted both for nearly 50 issues, writing controversial and classic tales including "The Death of Gwen Stacy," the first appearance of the Punisher, and the introduction of Harry Osborn as the Green Goblin. Cueing off his early interest in horror stories, Conway took advantage of Marvel's burgeoning line of horror comics, launching *Werewolf By Night* and *Man-Thing*, as well as writing the first issue of *Tomb of Dracula*.

In 1976, he was handed the top job at Marvel before transitioning to DC Comics. One of his first big assignments was writing the script for one of the first inter-company crossovers, *Superman vs. The Amazing Spider-Man.* Shortly thereafter, he began a long tenure on prime DC titles like *Superboy & The Legion of Super-Heroes*, *World's Finest* and *Wonder Woman.* He also introduced Firestorm with Al Milgrom in 1978, scribing all five issues of the short-lived '70s incarnation.

As the '80s dawned, he started a long run writing both key Batman titles, *Detective Comics* and *Batman*, and continued his run on *Justice League of America*, a stint that began in earnest in 1978 and would end with the dismantling of the infamous JLA Detroit in 1986. During this era, he also revived Firestorm with artist Pat Broderick; this time the title found traction and Conway wrote the first 53 issues. A return to Marvel in the late '80s saw Conway tackling two of the three Spider-Man titles: *The Spectacular Spider-Man* and *Web of Spider-Man*.

During this period, Conway was asserting himself as a writer in film and television. His early '80s screenplay collaborations with Roy Thomas resulted in the animated film *Fire and Ice* and barbarian sequel *Conan the Destroyer*. By the late '80s, his opportunities in television writing had expanded, and he left comics to pursue writing and producing for *Matlock*, *Father Dowling Mysteries*, *Diagnosis: Murder* and *Law & Order*.

Today, Conway continues writing and producing for television and has recently returned to script the occasional comic. He resides in California with his wife and their daughter.

GENE COLAN

Gene "The Dean" Colan spent his life as a comics artist perfecting a unique style that relied on realistic figure drawing and moody shadows. At a time when the norm lent itself to more abstract cartooning, Colan helped broaden the aesthetic range of what comics could look like.

Born in Brooklyn in 1926, Colan always had an interest in drawing, and he took up studies at the Art Students League of New York. Colan served his country during World War II in the Philippines, and though this delayed his art career, it eventually paid off with a solid acumen at drawing realistic scenes of warfare for DC Comics (*Our Army at War*, *All-American Men at War*) and the Atlas/Marvel titles (*Battle*, *Marines in Battle*, *Navy Combat*). Over the next 15 years, Colan would continue to work on war, romance, horror and sci-fi comics, as well as licensed titles like *Hopalong Cassidy*.

But when the super-hero genre broke wide open again in the '60s, Colan was ready to take it on with gusto. Under the pseudonym Adam Austin, he first drew Marvel Comics super heroes, including Namor, the Sub-Mariner in *Tales to Astonish* and Iron Man in *Tales of Suspense*. Colan then moved on to a celebrated run on *Doctor Strange* with Roy Thomas, and a stint on *Captain America*, but the Marvel character he is most often associated with is Daredevil. Colan's *Daredevil* pages were steeped in fluid, athletic grace for nearly every issue across an 80-issue run leading to #100. He also drew a handful of issues right before Frank Miller would come on board, Miller's *Daredevil* naturally owing a great debt to the already established visual precepts of the Colan era.

During the rest of the '70s, Colan displayed the diversity of his talents drawing the satirical *Howard the Duck* and the horror series *Tomb of Dracula*. The latter was drenched in the mysterious and shadowy style that Colan had evolved over the years, which reached its zenith in the service of Marvel's version of Count Dracula. He drew the entire 70-issue run.

Colan worked steadily into the '80s, once again drawing *Doctor Strange* for Marvel and also doing work for DC, including *Night Force*, *Silver Blade* and an extended run drawing Batman. In 2005, Colan was ushered into the Will Eisner Hall of Fame, earning well-deserved acclaim for his life's work. In 2009, Colan returned to the pages of *Captain America* to draw a World War II-based epic that would win the 2010 Eisner Award for Best Single Issue. It would prove to be his last major work in comics, as he passed away in 2011 at the age of 84.

Biographies researched and written by John Rhett Thomas

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THE MARVEL AGE

It was August 1961 and change was hitting the newsstands. *Fantastic Four* #1 did not feature the squeaky-clean heroes of yesteryear. These were real characters placed in extraordinary circumstances. They lived together, they fought among themselves—and sometimes, they even lost to the bad guys. This was more than a change in attitude: It was the beginning of something entirely different—the Marvel Age of Comics!

Thanks to the fertile imaginations of Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko and others, an unending list of heroes followed the FF with ever-increasing acclaim and popularity: the Amazing Spider-Man, the Mighty Thor, the Incredible Hulk, Daredevil, Iron Man and the X-Men, to name but a few. These were the Marvel heroes, born of conflict and a continuous struggle to balance human lives with superhuman responsibilities.

The *Marvel Masterworks* series was created to give comic-book readers everywhere the chance to experience the greatest comics the world has known as they were originally presented.

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THE GOLDEN AGE

As the Great Depression wore on and the specter of war hung over the heads of all Americans, a new entertaining escape from the newspapers' horrifying realities was born: the comic book. Within their four-color pages, larger-than-life super heroes could make short work of America's foes, giving readers of all ages hope for victory against the real-life enemies that faced the United States.

At the forefront of this new medium was Timely Comics, a young company staffed by such legendary talents as Carl Burgos, Bill Everett, Joe Simon, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee. These skilled writers and artists created a vast array of characters that would give rise to the Marvel Universe!

GOLDEN AGE ALL-WINNERS VOLS. 1-4
GOLDEN AGE CAPTAIN AMERICA VOLS. 1-6
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THE ATLAS ERA

Seeing super heroes waning, Timely Comics evolved into Atlas Comics and took on a vast new range of genres: science-fiction tales of outer space adventures and unimaginable monsters; realistic war comics; buxom jungle heroines; horror comics that would become the center of a moral panic that rocked the industry; and romance comics for the emerging teen audience. Even the classic costumed heroes of the '40s retooled to take on the threat of Communism. From Western gunfighters to crime to horror, Atlas had it all!

ATLAS ERA BATTLEFIELD VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA BLACK KNIGHT/YELLOW CLAW VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA HEROES VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY VOLS. 1-4
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ATLAS ERA TALES TO ASTONISH VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA TALES OF SUSPENSE VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA VENUS VOL. 1

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
FURY--AT 15,000 FEET!!
THE GLADIATOR STRIKES!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL
NO, DON'T LEAP OUT THE WINDOW!
IT'S THIRTY FLOORS TO THE STREET--STRAIGHT DOWN!!
I'M DYING--AND I'M TAKING YOU WITH ME!!
THE OX STRIKES AGAIN!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL
YOU REFUSED TO SERVE ME, MASKED MAN! SO NOW--YOU DIE!
HE'S BACK--AND HE'S OUT FOR BLOOD!!
KILLGRAVE--
THE PURPLE MAN!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR
BUT YOU'LL NEVER BEAT US BOTH!!
WHY DON'T YOU QUIT, LIE DOWN AND DIE, DAREDEVIL!
MAYBE YOU COULD HANDLE ELECTRO--OR EVEN KILLGRAVE--
CRISIS IN THE SKY!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
WIDOW! HELP ME--I'M FALLING!
I--I CAN'T! I WON'T! IT MUSN'T CAN'T!!
FEAR IS A MAN!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
YOU HAVE KNOWN FEAR, MASKED MAN!
WOW, SHAKE HANDS WITH DEATH!!
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR BUT--
MR. FEAR!
BUT THAT'S ENOUGH!!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL AND THE BLACK WIDOW
KEEP AWAY FROM HIS MARKED MAN! ONE MORE BLOW--WOULD KILL HIM!
MATT--TELL THAT MONSTER SHOW!
WHAT'S GOING ON? MATT MURDOCK RUSHING TO SAVE THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR? DON'T MISS...
THE BLUE TALON STRIKES!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL AND THE BLACK WIDOW
I'M BACK AGAIN--BIGGER--STRONGER THAN EVER!
AND THIS TIME, NOTHING CAN STOP ME!!
RE-ENTER--THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN!
HE COULD CRUSH THE WORLD!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DAREDEVIL AND THE BLACK WIDOW
YOU HURT MANBULL--MADE PEOPLE FEAR HIM IN PRISON--
AND NOW--YOU MUST PAY!!
THE MAN-BULL MAKES HIS MOVE!

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